The Kutb Minar at Delhi

The famous Kutb Minar at Delhi is the tallest minaret in the world, and is a grand monument of Mohammedan art, dating from the time of Kutb-ad-din Aybek or his successor, Altamish, early in the thirteenth century. It is built of a reddish sandstone, capped with two bands of white marble, and rises two hundred and forty feet above the ground. The arabesque inscriptions around its base are particularly handsome.

HISTORY of INDIA

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VOLUME III

Mediæval India from the Mohammedan Conquest to the Reign of Akbar the Great

By

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INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR

The rise of Mohammed and the spread of Islam were events fraught with momentous consequences for the East and for the history of the world. India came in for her share in the changes thus brought about and was subjected to the religious and political sway of this great movement whose impulse she first felt in the eighth century of the Christian era. So important in general and so far-reaching were the influences exerted that few readers will object to the fact that three volumes of the present series are devoted to this period of Indian history which is commonly designated as the Mediæval Period.

The first of the three forms part of the work of Professor Stanley Lane-Poole, and deals with the successive invasions that began when the Arabs landed in Sind and were later followed by the Moslem Afghans, who made inroad after inroad into Hindustan and gave place in turn to the raiding Turks, and they again to the Mongols. The history of these events, which led up to the founding of the great Moghul Empire in the

sixteenth century of our era, is vividly portrayed by Dr. Lane-Poole, whose work is to be commended to the reader as giving a most graphic picture of the rise and establishment of a mighty force in India's life and development.

As editor I have followed the same general plan that was adopted in the previous volumes to make the text conform with the needs of the series. Special care has been taken as before to illustrate the period appropriately, and for aid in this matter—outside of my own collection of photographs—I desire to express acknowledgments again to others who have made several sources available for use.

A. V. Williams Jackson.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The Mediæval Period of Indian history, though it does not exactly correspond with the Middle Age of Europe, is not less clearly defined. It begins when the immemorial systems, rule, and customs of Ancient India were invaded, subdued, and modified by a succession of foreign conquerors who imposed a new rule and introduced an exotic creed, strange languages, and a foreign art. These conquerors were Moslems, and with the arrival of the Turks under Mahmud of Ghazni at the beginning of the eleventh century, India entered upon her Middle Age. From that epoch for nearly eight hundred years her history is grouped round the Mohammedan rulers who gradually brought under their control nearly the whole country from the Himalayas to the Krishna River. The period ends when one of the last of these rulers, oppressed by the revival of Hindu ascendency, placed himself under English protection, and Modern India came into being.

Distinct and clearly marked as the Mediæval or Mohammedan Period is, the transition implies no violent change. History is always continuous; there can

be no "fresh start"; and each new period carries on much of what preceded it. In India, as ever in the East, change is so gradual as to be almost imperceptible. Ancient India was too deeply rooted in its traditions to wither even under the storm of Moslem conquest. The old Indian life survived the shock of the new ideas, which it modified at least as much as it was modified; it outlived the Moslem Period, and still endures, but little altered, in the modern age of English domination. It never really assimilated the foreigners or their ideas. Despite the efforts of a few wide-seeing men like Akbar, no true or permanent union, except occasionally among the official and ruling classes, ever took place between the Moslems and the Hindus; and the ascendent races, whether Turks, Persians, Afghans, or Moghuls, remained essentially an army of occupation among a hostile or at least repellent population.

The history of the Mohammedan Period is, therefore, necessarily more a chronicle of kings and courts and conquests than of organic or national growth. The vast mass of the people enjoy the doubtful happiness of having no history, since they show no development; apparently they are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Nor was there any such marked change even in the principles and methods of government as might be expected from the diversity of successive rulers of various races. English Collector-Magistrates follow much the same system, in essential outline, as that which Akbar adopted from his Hindu Chancellor, and many executive details and most of the principles of

local administration have their origin in probably prehistoric custom. But in the character and life of the rulers there is infinite variety, and it is round the lives of great men—and a few great women, though such seldom emerge before the public gaze in the East—that the chief interest of the Mediæval Period centres. A history of the people is usually assumed, in the present day, to be more stimulating and instructive than the record of kings and courts; but even if true, this can only be understood of Western peoples, of peoples who strive to go forward, or at least change. In the East the people does not change, and there, far more than among progressive races, the "simple annals of the poor," however moving and pathetic, are indescribably trite and monotonous compared with the lives of those more fortunate beings to whom much has been given in opportunity, wealth, power, and knowledge. Such contrasted characters as those of Ala-ad-din, Mohammad Taghlak, Babar, Akbar, and Aurangzib may rival any that could be named in Europe in the same four centuries; and in the lives and policies, the wars and studies, the habits and ceremonies of such leaders the imagination finds ample scope for the realization of strangely vivid and dramatic situations.

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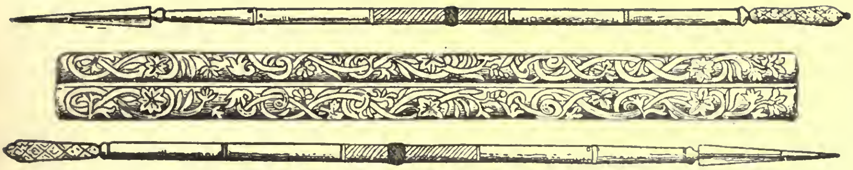


ARAB SPEARS.

CHAPTER I

MOHAMMEDAN INVASION

THE ARABS IN SIND

712 A.D.

THE population of India in the present day is over three hundred millions, and every sixth man is a Moslem. Nine hundred years ago there were no Mohammedans east of the Indus, where now there are more than fifty millions and the King of England rules twice as many Moslem subjects as the Sultan of Turkey and the Shah of Persia together. For six centuries the Hindus submitted to the sovereignty of Mohammedan kings, and when the great effort was made in 1857 to throw off the British yoke, it was round the Mohammedan Emperor of Delhi, though but a shadow of a famous name, that the mutineers rallied. How the Moslems, foreigners both in creed and race, came to conquer India, and how this small but increasing minority imposed its will upon the greater part of the people of the land, is the subject of this and the succeeding volume.

When we speak of the Mohammedans as foreigners, we mean of course the original conquerors. The present Moslem population is almost as native as the Hindus

themselves. The invaders consisted of armies of men, very few of whom brought their women with them. They married Hindu wives, and the mixed race thus formed intermarried further with the natives, and each generation became more and more Indian. Besides the Moslems descended from the successive armies of invaders and their native wives, a very large proportion of the Indian Moslems were and are native converts from Hinduism. It has been estimated that about fifty thousand Hindus "turn Turk" annually, and neither the religion nor the rule of the Moslems has proved intolerable to the natives. Islam commended itself to the Indian intellect as a more congenial faith than Christianity, and the disorder and corruption of Mohammedan government were not distasteful to a people who had never known anything better.

Yet the real Mohammedan conquerors of India were not Arabs, but Turks. When the armies of the Saracens spread out over the ancient world in the seventh century, they overcame most human obstacles, but nature itself was sometimes impregnable. They overran North Africa, but the inhospitable desert of the Sahara discouraged any southern expansion; they occupied Spain, but the Atlantic checked their progress west, and being but indifferent sailors they left to their European successors the glory of discovering the New World. In the East they conquered Persia as far as the great rivers of Central Asia, but the icy walls of the Hindu Kush saved India. The famous Arab general Ali Tigin subdued Bokhara and Samarkand, but he did not venture

to surmount the snows that barred the way to Hindustan. The Arabs never opened that perilous northwest passage from Afghanistan, which has poured so many foreign hordes into the teeming plains below.

The only Arab attempt upon India came from a different quarter. Little as the Moslems of the desert relished the dangers of the deep, there were seafaring traders on the Arabian coasts to whom the ports of Western India had been familiar from the earliest times. Arab merchants sailed from Siraf and Hurmuz in the Persian Gulf, coasting along till they came to the mouth of the Indus, and thence on to Sapera and Cambay; or they even struck boldly across from their harbours at Kalhat and Kurayyat in Oman to Calicut and other ports on the Malabar coast. These men brought back tidings of the wealth and luxury of India, of gold and diamonds, of jewelled idols and gorgeous religious rites, and of a wonderful civilization. The temptation of such wealth was sanctioned by the zeal of the iconoclast, and the spoliation of the idolaters became a means of grace. At a time when the armies of Islam were overrunning the known world, such a field of operations as India could not be overlooked, and accordingly we find a pillaging expedition visiting Tana (near the present Bombay) as early as 637, during the reign of the caliph Omar, the second successor of Mohammed the Prophet. Other forays followed, for the Arabs of the Persian Gulf were a venturesome folk.

All these, however, were mere raids. Plunder, not conquest, was their aim, and they led to nothing more.

The only serious invasion of the Arabs was by land from Mekran, the most eastern province of the caliphate on the Persian coast, whose Mohammedan governors frequently came to blows with the Indians across the frontier, where no natural barrier intervened. The invasion was belated, compared with the other campaigns, for the caliphs' hands were full of more pressing affairs. The tremendous successes of the first sweep of Arab conquest are apt to blind us to the tedious and toilsome progress of their arms in all but the earliest campaigns. No doubt their triumph over the degenerate empires of Rome and Persia was comparatively swift. Five years sufficed for the subjugation of Syria, seven more saw Persia at their feet, and two were enough for the conquest of all Egypt. But when the Arabs were opposed by tribes as untamed and warlike as themselves, their advance was slow and difficult, and every mile was obstinately disputed. Carthage, for example, was all but reached within a few years of the conquest of Egypt, but it did not actually fall for nearly half a century, and the vigorous resistance of the Berber tribes delayed the progress of the Moslems in Africa till the close of the seventh century. It was the same in the East. While Persia was speedily overcome as far as the river Oxus, it was not till the first decade of the eighth century, almost two hundred years later, that the country beyond its banks was added to the settled provinces of the caliphate. The Arabs were too few for all the work they attempted in widely separated lands, and up to 700 A. D. they had quite enough to do

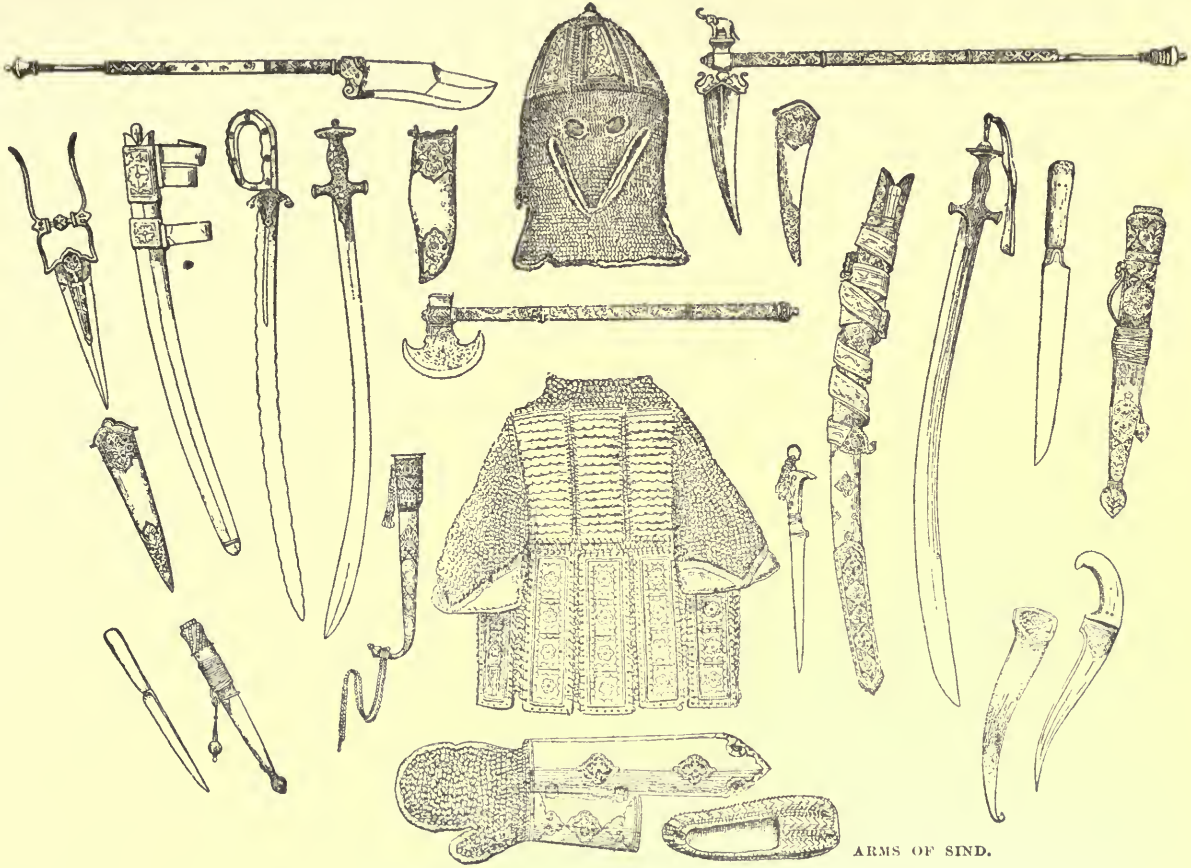
without burdening themselves with such an enterprise as the conquest of India.

The first and only Arab invasion of the land of the Ganges coincided in date with two other signal successes of Mohammedan arms in distant parts of the globe. Gothic Spain was shattered at the battle of the Guadalete in 710; the standards of Islam were carried from Samarkand to Kashghar in 711-14; and the valley of the Indus was invaded in 712. These three steps mark the zenith of the power of the Omayyad caliphate, and coincide with the administration of one of the ablest and most relentless of all Moslem statesmen. Al-Hajjaj, the governor of Chaldæa, sent Kutaiba north to spread Islam over the borders of Tartary, and at the same time despatched his own cousin, Mohammad ibn Kasim, to India. The reigning caliph consented unwillingly; he dreaded the distance, the cost, the loss of life. Even in those days, to adapt modern phrases, there were the opposing policies of "Little Arabians" and "Imperialists." Al-Hajjaj was imperialist to the core, and to him the Arabs owed the impulse which gave them all they ever won in India.

The story of Mohammad ibn Kasim's adventures is one of the romances of history. He was but seventeen, and he was venturing into a region scarcely touched as yet by Saracen spears, a land inhabited by warlike races, possessed of an ancient and deeply rooted civilization—there to found a government which, however successful, would be the loneliest in the whole vast Mohammedan empire, a province cut off by sea, by moun-

tains, and by desert from all peoples of kindred race and faith. Youth and high spirit, however, forbade alike fear and foreboding. The young general had at least six thousand picked horsemen at his back, chosen from the caliph's veterans, with an equal number of camelry, and was supplied with a baggage-train of three thousand Bactrian camels. Marching through Mekran, along the Persian coast, he was joined by the provincial governor with more troops; and five stone-slings for siege-work were sent by sea to meet him at Daibul, or Debal, in Sind, the great mediæval port of the Indus valley and forerunner of the modern city of Karachi.

There at Daibul, in the spring of 712, Mohammad ibn Kasim set up his catapults and dug his trench. A description of this siege has come down to us from the early historian al-Baladhuri (about 840), from which it appears that the Arab spearmen were drawn up along the trench, each separate company under its own banner, and that five hundred men were stationed to work the heavy catapult named "the Bride." A great red flag flaunted on the top of a tall Hindu temple, and the order came from Hajjaj, with whom the general was in constant communication, to "fix the stone-sling and shorten its foot and aim at the flagstaff." So the gunners lowered the trajectory and brought down the pole with a shrewd shot. The fall of the sacred flag dismayed the garrison; a sortie was repulsed with loss; the Moslems brought ladders and scaled the walls, and the place was carried by storm. The governor fled, the Brahmans were butchered, and after three days of car-



ARMS OF SIND.

nage a Mohammedan quarter was laid out, a mosque built, and a garrison of four thousand men detached to hold the city.

After the storming of Daibul, the young general marched up the right bank of the Indus in search of the main body of the enemy. Discovering their outposts on the other side, he tied a string of boats together, filled them with archers, made one end fast to the west bank, and then let the whole floating bridge drift down and across, like an angler's cast of flies, till it touched the opposite side, where it was made fast to stakes under cover of the archers' arrows. The enemy, unable to oppose the landing, fell back upon Rawar, where the Arabs beheld for the first time the imposing array of Hindu chiefs, mounted on armoured war-elephants, and led by their king Dahir. Naphtha arrows, however, threw the elephants into confusion and set fire to the howdahs; the king was slain, the Hindus fled, and "the Moslems were glutted with slaughter." The Indian women showed the desperate courage for which they were famous. The king's sister called them together, on seeing the defeat of their men; and, refusing to owe their lives to the "vile cow-eaters" at the price of dishonour, they set their houses ablaze and perished in the flames. Another victory at Brahmanabad opened the way to Multan, the chief city of the upper Indus, which surrendered at discretion, but not without an exhausting siege. The fighting men were massacred, and the priests, workmen, women, and children were made captives.

The fall of Multan laid the Indus valley at the feet of the conqueror. The tribes came in, "ringing bells and beating drums and dancing," in token of welcome. The Hindu rulers had oppressed them heavily, and the Jats and Meds and other tribes were on the side of the invaders. The work of conquest, as often happened in India, was thus aided by the disunion of the inhabitants, and jealousies of race and creed conspired to help the Moslems. To such suppliants Mohammad ibn Kasim gave the liberal terms that the Arabs usually offered to all but inveterate foes. He imposed the customary poll-tax, took hostages for good conduct, and spared the people's lands and lives.

JAT NOBLES.

He even left their shrines undesecrated: "The temples," he proclaimed, "shall be inviolate, like the churches of the Christians, the synagogues of the Jews, and the altars of the Magians." There was worldly wisdom in this toleration, for the pilgrims' dues paid to the temples formed an important source of revenue, and the Moslems found it expedient to compound with idolatry, as a vain thing but lucrative, in the interests of the public treasury. Occasional looting of Hindu fanes took place—we read of "a cart-load of four-armed idols"

sent as a suitable gift to the caliph, who no doubt preferred specie—but such demonstrations were probably rare sops to the official conscience, and as a rule the Mohammedan government of Multan was at once tolerant and economic. The citizens and villagers were allowed to furnish the tax-collectors themselves; the Brahmans were protected and entrusted with high offices, for which their education made them indispensable; and the conqueror's instructions to all his officers were wise and conciliatory:—"Deal honestly," he commanded, "between the people and the governor; if there be distribution, distribute equitably, and fix the revenue according to the ability to pay. Be in concord among yourselves, and wrangle not, that the country be not vexed."

The young general's fate was tragic. A new caliph succeeded who was no friend to the conqueror of Sind. Hajjaj was dead, and there was none to oppose factious intrigues at the distant court of Damascus. In spite of his brilliant achievements, Mohammad ibn Kasim was disgraced and put to death. The story runs that he was accused of having made too free with the captive daughters of Dahir before presenting them to the caliph's harem, and that he was punished for the presumption by being sewn up alive in a raw cowhide. "Three days afterward the bird of life arose from his body and soared to heaven;" and the hide with its noble burden was sent to Damascus. The young hero had made no protest, never questioned the death-warrant, but submitted to the executioners with the fearless dignity he had shown throughout his short but valiant

life. When the sacrifice was accomplished, however, the Indian princesses, moved perhaps by the courage of a victim brave as their own devoted race, confessed that their tale was deliberately invented to avenge their father's death upon his conqueror. The caliph in impotent fury had them dragged at horses' tails through the city till they perished miserably, but the second crime was no expiation for the first.

The Arabs had conquered Sind, but the conquest was only an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results. The Indus province, it is true, is as large as England, but it consists chiefly of desert, and the Arabs made no attempt to extend their dominion into the fertile plains beyond. It has been supposed that the crude civilization and austere creed of the Moslems stood aghast before the rich and ancient culture, the profound philosophy, and the sensual ritual of the Hindus; but these contrasts did not check the later successes of Islam in the same land. The more obvious explanation of the Arabs' failure is found in the as yet unbroken strength of the Rajput kings on the north and east, and in the inadequate forces despatched by the caliphs for so formidable a project as the conquest of India. After the first expedition under the ill-fated Mohammad ibn Kasim we hear of no reinforcements, and twenty years after his death the Arabs were still so insecure on the Indus that they built a city of refuge as a retreat in times of jeopardy. The province was not only imperfectly subdued but extremely poor, and the caliphs soon abandoned it in all

but name, as too unremunerative to be worth maintaining. The Árab settlers formed independent dynasties at Multan and at the new city of Mansura, which Mohammad ibn Kasim's son founded in lower Sind; and when the traveller Mas'udi visited the valley of the Indus in the tenth century, he found chiefs of the Prophet's tribe of the Kuraish ruling both the upper and the lower province. A little later another traveller, Ibn Haukal, explored Sind, where he heard Arabic and Sindi spoken, and observed much friendly toleration between the Moslem and Hindu population. Soon afterward Multan became a refuge for scattered bands of Karmathians, when the power of those Mohammedan sectaries waned before the rising ascendency of the Fatimid caliphs of Egypt, and when Arabia was delivered from the Karmathian reign of terror. But the meagre annals of this limited and ineffectual occupation of an unimportant province need not long detain us. The Arab conquest of Sind led to nothing, and left scarcely a vestige, save in the names of certain Arab families and in the ruins of the buildings they destroyed. The Arab cities have perished, but the wrecks of the castles and cities of their predecessors, which formed as usual the quarries for the conquerors' buildings, still bear witness to the civilization which they uprooted.

CHAPTER II

THE IDOL-BREAKER

MAHMUD OF GHAZNI

997–1030 A.D.

THE Arab invasion was a failure. It attacked from the wrong quarter, occupied the least productive province, and was too feebly supported to spread farther. We hear no more of the Arabs as conquerors in India. The rôle devolved upon the Turks, and when we speak of the Mohammedan empire in India we mean the rule of the Turks. Their invasion was no part of the expansion of Islam as a religious movement. It was merely the overflow of the teeming cradle-land of Central Asia, the eastern counterpart of those vast migrations of Huns, Turks, and Mongols, which from time to time swept over Europe like a locust cloud. Huns and Scythians had poured into India in prehistoric ages through those grim northwestern passes which every now and then opened like sluice-gates to let the turbid flood of barbarians down into the deep calm waters of the Indian world. Their descendants still muster in tribes and clans on the borders of Hindustan, and bring strange customs and beliefs to mingle

with that old religion of the Vedas which the Aryan forefathers of the Brahmans and Rajputs bore with them through the same narrow entry. Following in their track, Alexander the Great led his armies to meet

SCENE IN AN AFGHAN PASS.

Porus on the Hydaspes; and after him came Græco-Bactrian legions to inspire new ideas of art and civilization, and to learn perhaps more than they taught. Finally the Moslem Turks discovered the same road, and when once they had become familiar with the way, they came again and again on successive inroads, until

the whole of India, save the very apex of the south, owned their sway.

The southerly migration of the Turks was the master-movement in the Mohammedan empire in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Hitherto the caliphate had remained undisturbed by armed invasion. On the fall of the Omayyad line, the seat of government had been moved from Damascus to the new capital founded by their successors the Abbasid caliphs at Baghdad, and the change had been followed by a large influx of Persian ideas into the Arab system. Persian officials, better educated and shrewder men of affairs, replaced Arabs in many of the chief posts of government, and as the central authority grew weaker and more effeminate, Persian governors acquired almost independent power in the more distant provinces and began to found hereditary dynasties, one of the most powerful and enlightened being that of the Samanid princes in the country about the Oxus.

The increase, peaceful as it was, of Persian influence, when combined with the constant jealousies and truculence of the Arab tribes settled in Mesopotamia, induced the caliphs to provide themselves with a guard of mercenaries closely attached to the throne, and for this purpose the warlike and handsome young Turks captured on the northern frontier supplied all that was desired in valour and ability. Surrounded by such prætorians the caliphs indulged their love of luxury free from the dread of Persian usurpation or Arab revolt. But ere long the Turkish guard became the masters of

the caliphs; Turkish officers gradually acquired the control of provinces; and throughout the Mohammedan empire, from Egypt to Samarkand, the Turks became the dominant race. Their success attracted others of their kind, and soon they invited their brethren to come and share their prosperity. Turks overflowed

THE FORTRESS OF GHAZNI.
From the Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan.

into Persia from their native steppes; the Samanid kingdom, after two centuries of power well employed, degenerated into a mad rivalry of Turkish adventurers, and this scramble led to the invasion of India.

Among the Turkish condottieri who rose to high office in Northern Persia was one Alptagin, who, falling out with his Samanid lord, established himself with

a couple of thousand followers in the fortress of Ghazni in the heart of the Afghan mountains (A. D. 962). Here, in a kind of no-man's-land, secure from interference, he made his little kingdom, and here after an interval his slave Sabuktagin reigned in his stead (976). The new ruler was not content with the original stronghold of his master. He gathered under his banner the neighbouring Afghan tribes, added whole provinces to his dominions—Laghman to the east in the Kabul valley and Sistan on the Persian side—and, when called to support the tottering Samanid prince of Bokhara against the encroaching Turks, he turned the occasion to his own advantage and placed his son Mahmud in command of the rich province of Khorasan. Sabuktagin was the first Moslem who attempted the invasion of India from the northwest. He went but a little way, it is true; his repeated defeat of Jaipal, the Brahman raja of the Panjab, in the Kabul valley, ended only in the temporary submission of the Indian king and the payment of tribute; but it pointed the way to Hindustan.

Sabuktagin died in 997 before he could accomplish any larger scheme, but his son more than realized his most daring dreams. Mahmud had all his father's soldierly energy and spirit of command, joined to a restless activity, a devouring ambition, and the temper of a zealot. Zeal for Islam was the dominant note of the tenth-century Turks, as of most new converts. The great missionary creed of Mohammed, which to the Arabs and Persians had become a familiar matter of

routine, was a source of fiery inspiration to the untutored men of the steppes. To spread the faith by conquest doubled their natural zest for battle and endowed them with the devoted valour of martyrs. Mahmud was a staunch Moslem, and if his campaigns against the idolaters brought him rich store of treasure and captives, it was in his eyes no more than the fit reward of piety; and in the intervals between his forays into heathendom he would sit down and copy Korans for the welfare of his soul. The caliph of Baghdad, who had probably outgrown such illusions, was not the man to balk a willing sword. He sent Mahmud his pontifical sanction and the official diploma of investiture as rightful lord of Ghazni and Khorasan, and in the height of satisfaction Mahmud vowed that every year he would wage a Holy War against the infidels of Hindustan.

If he did not keep the letter of his vow, he fell little short. Between the years 1000 and 1026 he made at least sixteen distinct campaigns in India, in which he ranged across the plains from the Indus to the Ganges. His first attack was, of course, upon the frontier towns of the Khaibar pass. His father's old enemy, Jaipal, endeavoured in vain to save Peshawar. Mahmud sent out 15,000 of his best horsemen and utterly routed him, despite his larger forces and his 300 elephants. Jaipal and fifteen of his kindred were brought captives before the conqueror. Their jewelled necklaces, worth, it is said, 180,000 dinars, or almost £90,000 apiece, were torn off, and half a million of slaves, and booty past all reck-

oning, according to the florid statements of the Oriental historians, fell into the hands of the Moslems. Mahmud was not cruel; he seldom indulged in wanton slaughter; and when a treaty of peace had been concluded, the raja and his friends were set free. With the proud despair of his race, Jaipal refused to survive his dis-

THE FORT AT PESHAWAR.

grace. Preferring death to dishonour, he cast himself upon a funeral pyre.

There were many other kings besides Jaipal, however; and when, after a successful raid upon Bhira, where "the Hindus rubbed their noses in the dust of disgrace," and another to Multan, whose Mohammedan (or rather Karmathian) ruler fled aghast, Mahmud appeared again at the mouth of the Khaibar in 1008, he found all the rajas of the Panjab, backed by allies from other parts of Hindustan, mustered to resist him with Anandpal, the son of Jaipal, at their head. Mahmud had never yet encountered such an army, and he

hastily entrenched his camp and waited forty days, facing the constantly swelling forces of the enemy. His first move, probably a mere reconnaissance, was disastrous. The thousand archers he sent forward were driven back into the camp, followed by a charging mob of wild Gakkars—a fierce Scythian tribe whose outbreaks troubled the peace of the northwest frontier as late as 1857, and whose savage aspect, bareheaded and barefoot, and barbarous habits of infanticide and polyandry, struck terror and disgust among the Moslems. These frantic hillmen rushed the trenches and slashed right and left; man and horse fell before their onslaught, and the Turks were well-nigh panic-stricken. The Rajputs were already advancing under cover of the Gakkars' charge, and Mahmud was about to sound the retreat, when one of those lucky accidents happened which have often turned the fortune of a day. Anandpal's elephant took fright; the rumour ran that the raja was flying from the field; vague suspicions and distrust spread, and a general stampede ensued. Instead of retreating before a victorious army, in the turn of an instant Mahmud found himself pursuing a routed horde. For two days the Moslems slew, captured, and despoiled to their hearts' content. "They had come through fire and through water, but their Lord had brought them into a wealthy place."

On a spur of the snow mountains, surrounded by a moat, stood the fortress of Kangra (Nagarkot), deemed impregnable by mortal power. Here the rajas and wealthy men of India were wont to store their

treasure, and hither the triumphant Moslems came, hot with pursuit and victory. The panic that had dissolved the hosts of the Panjab seized the garrison of the fortress, weakened as it must have been by the general levy to oppose the invaders. At Mahmud's blockade the defenders "fell to the earth like sparrows before the hawk." Immense stores of treasure and jewels, money and silver ingots, were laden upon camels, and a pavilion of silver and a canopy of Byzantine linen reared upon pillars of silver and gold were among the prizes of the Holy War. The booty was displayed in the court of the palace at Ghazni, "jewels and unbored pearls and rubies, shining like sparks or iced wine, emeralds as it were sprigs of young myrtle, diamonds as big as pomegranates." The Eastern chroniclers tell of seventy million silver dirhams, and hundreds of thousands of pounds' weight of silver cups and vessels; and, with every allowance for exaggeration, the spoils must have been colossal. All the world flocked to Ghazni to gaze upon the incredible wealth of India.

Such rewards were incentives enough to carry on the pious work. Year after year Mahmud swept over the plains of Hindustan, capturing cities and castles, throwing down temples and idols, and earning his titles of "Victor" and "Idol-breaker," *Ghazi* and *But-shikan*. Little is known about the political condition of India at the time of these raids, but it is evident that after the great rout in the Panjab there was no concerted resistance. The country was split up into numerous

kingdoms, many of which were at feud with one another. There were the Brahman kings of Gandhara on the Indus, the Tomaras at Delhi and Kanauj, the Buddhist Palas of Magadha on the lower Ganges, the survivors of the Guptas in Malwa, the Kalachuris on the Narbada, the Chandellas of Mahoba, and many more, who united might have stemmed any invasion, but whose jealousies brought them ruin. Internal division has proved the undoing of India again and again, and has sapped the power of mere numbers which alone could enable the men of the warm plains to stand against the hardy mountain tribes and the relentless horsemen of the Central Asian steppes. To the contrasts of union and disunion, north and south, race and climate, was added the zeal of the Moslem and the greed of the robber. The mountaineers were as poor as they were brave, and covetous as they were devout. The treasures of India, heaped up round the colossal figures of obscene idols, appealed irresistibly to these hungry fanatics. It was no wonder that they carried all before them, devoured the rich lands like a cloud of locusts, and returned to their frozen homes with a welcome such as meets the mooring of an argosy. Each campaign made them stronger and more terrible. They brought home not treasure only, but recruits, and to the volunteers who flocked to the spoil from the Oxus and Jaxartes, and to the unrivalled cavalry of their native

A HINDU IDOL.

steppes, they gradually added a powerful force of elephantry fit to confront the heavy arm that formed the first line of battle of an Indian host.

Mahmud's success, however, was not won without hard fighting and sore privations. Man was more easily overcome than nature, and the endurance of the hardy and vigorous northmen was often tested almost to the breaking-point. When they set out in 1013 to invade "the capital of India," whose king had failed to pay his annual tribute of fifty laden elephants and two thousand slaves, they were checked at the frontier by deep snow; the mountains and valleys appeared almost level under the treacherous white mantle, and the army was forced to protect itself in winter quarters. Moving onwards in the warmer weather, they wandered for months "among broad deep rivers and dense jungles where even wild beasts might get lost." At last they found "the King of India"—probably one of the Sahi dynasty of Gandhara—posted in a narrow pass with his vassals at his back. The veterans from the Oxus and the "devilish Afghan spearmen bored into the gorge like a gimlet into wood," but it took days of hard fighting before the place was carried. Then followed a weary march across the stern desert of Rajputana to Thanesar, a day's journey from Delhi, and here again a local raja had to be dislodged from a steep pass, where he waited with his splendid troop of Ceylon elephants behind a rapid river. But Mahmud was no novice in tactics. He forded the river and crowned the heights on either side, and while two detachments

fell upon the enemy's flanks, the Sultan's main battle flung itself into the ravine and the position was stormed. The river ran blood, the pass was a shambles; but the Hindus fled, their famous elephants were captured, and their town gave up its spoil.

There was no lack of volunteers to aid in the Holy War. Mahmud's victories were known all over the East, and twenty thousand warriors came to him from the country beyond the Oxus, praying to be granted the privilege of fighting for the faith, and so, perchance, attaining the crown of martyrdom. With a large army, stiffened by these zealots, the Sultan fought his greatest campaign in 1018, and pushed farther east than ever before. He marched upon Kanauj, the capital of the Tomara rajas, reputed to be the chief city of Hindustan. The march was an orgy and an ovation. Everywhere envoys waited on the conqueror, bearing proffers of homage and welcome. The chief who held the passes of Kashmir, which immemorial jealousy had guarded with infinite precaution from foreign footsteps, tendered his fealty and his service as a guide. One after another the rivers of India were crossed, Indus, Jihlam, Chinab, Ravi, Sutlaj, with scarcely a check. Forts and cities surrendered as the great Sultan passed by; abject chiefs placed their followers at his disposal; through the thick jungle he penetrated "like a comb through a poll of hair," fighting when necessary, but more often triumphing by mere prestige. Early in December he reached the Jumna and stood before the walls of Mathura, an ancient home of Hindu worship,

filled with temples " not built by man but by the Jinn," where colossal golden idols flashed with jewels, and silver gods of loathly aspect stood so huge that they had to be broken up before they could be weighed.

Pressing eastwards he came to Kanauj before the end of December. The raja had already fled at the mere bruit of the Sultan's coming, and the seven forts of the great

THE SACRED RIVER JUMNA AND TEMPLES AT MATHURA.

city on the Ganges fell in one day. Of all its gorgeous shrines not a temple was spared. Nor were the neighbouring princes more fortunate. Deep jungles and broad moats could not protect Chandal Bhor of Asi; and even Chand Rai, the great lord of Sharwa, when he heard the ominous tramp of the Turkish horsemen, gathered up his treasures and made for the hills: for it was told him that " Sultan Mahmud was not like the rulers of Hind, and those who followed him were not

black men." Flight did not save Chand Rai; the enemy tracked him through the forest, and coming up with him at midnight, attacked in the dark, routed, plundered, and revelled for three days, and carried home such booty and mobs of prisoners that the slave markets of Persia were glutted, and a servant could be bought for a couple of shillings.

Two years later the Sultan met the evasive raja of Kanauj. It was at the "Rahib" (probably the Ramaganga), a deep river with a black bituminous bottom, "fit to scald a scabby sheep." Fording was out of the question, and Mahmud ordered his advance-guard to swim the river on air-skins, plying their bows as they swam. The men plunged in, the Hindus fled, and once more victory declared for the men of the north. In the next two campaigns Lahore, Gwalior, and Kalinjar surrendered to a conqueror who would take no denial, and in the winter of 1025-6 the Sultan made his final invasion of Gujarat, crowning his victories by the capture of the city of Somnath, with its costly temple and its wondrous god. There a hundred thousand pilgrims were wont to assemble, a thousand Brahmans served the temple and guarded its treasures, and hundreds of dancers and singers played before its gates. Within stood the famous linga, a rude pillar-stone adorned with gems and lighted by jewelled candelabra, which were reflected in the rich hangings, embroidered with precious stones like stars, that decked the shrine.

So long as this worshipful emblem stood inviolate, Mahmud could not rest from his idol-breaking, nor

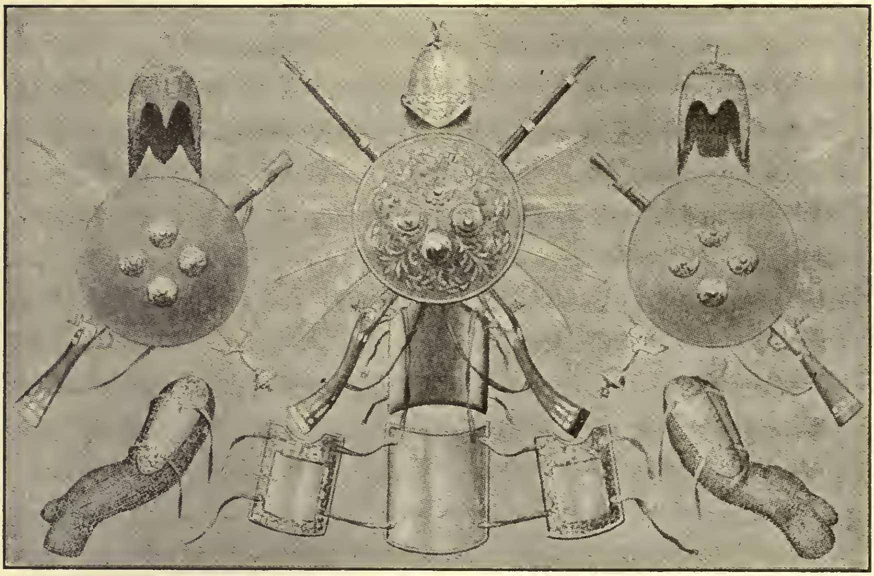
his treasury boast the finest gems in India. Hence his arduous march across the desert from Multan to Anhalwara, and on to the coast, fighting as he went, until he saw at last the famous fortress washed by the waves of the Arabian sea. Its ramparts swarmed with incredulous Brahmans, mocking the vain arrogance of the foreign infidels whom the god of Somnath would assuredly consume. The foreigners, nothing daunted, scaled the walls; the god remained dumb to the urgent appeals of his servants; fifty thousand Hindus suffered for their faith, and the sacred shrine was sacked to the joy of the true believers. The great stone was cast down, and its fragments carried off to grace the conqueror's palace. The temple gates were set up at Ghazni, and a million pounds' worth of treasure rewarded the iconoclast.

The sack of Somnath has made Mahmud of Ghazni a champion of the faith in the eyes of every Moslem for nearly nine centuries, and the feat, signal enough in itself, has been embellished with fantastic legends. The difficulties of the outward march were renewed on the return; the army was led astray by treacherous guides and almost perished in the waterless desert, from which it escaped only to fall into the hands of the predatory Jats of the Salt Range, who harassed the exhausted troops as they toiled homewards, laden with spoils. Before the year was over Mahmud led his army for the last time into India to punish those who had opposed him. He is said to have built a fleet at Multan, armed it with spikes and rams, and placed twenty

archers with naphtha bombs on each of his fourteen hundred boats, which engaged the vessels of the Jats, four thousand in number, and by rams and naphtha sank or burned their craft. Whatever really happened, we may be sure that there were never five thousand boats on the upper Indus, and that mountain tribes do not usually fight naval battles. Having chastised the Jats, whether by land or water matters little, Mahmud retired to Ghazni, where he died four years later (April 30, 1030).

In all these laborious though triumphant campaigns, the thought of their home-coming must have been uppermost in every man's mind, from Sultan to bhisti. There was no dream of occupying India. The very disunion and jealousy of the Hindu rajas, which smoothed the way to wide and successful forays, offered obvious obstacles to permanent annexation. Each victory meant no more than the conquest of one or more princes; the rest were unaffected, and, since there was no single supreme head to treat with, the most complete success in the field did not imply the submission of the country. The mass of the people, no doubt, did submit, just as they have patiently submitted to a series of foreign rulers with immovable indifference; but so long as there were chiefs in arms, followed by bands of desperate Rajputs, an occupation of India was beyond the means of the forces of Ghazni. But Mahmud did not aim at permanent conquest. The time had not yet come when the Turks could think seriously of living in India. Their home was still beyond the passes, and

in the latter years of his reign Mahmud had extended his rule over the greater part of Persia, as far as the mountains of Kurdistan—a land of Moslems and infinitely preferable in Turkish eyes in every way, save wealth, to sultry Hindustan, though not perhaps to the



OLD AFGHAN ARMOUR.

terraced villages among the green valleys and familiar crags of the Afghan hills.

Mahmud had overrun Northern India from the Indus to the Ganges, but his home was still Ghazni among the mountains. Here he stored his immense treasure, and here he presided over a stately and cultivated court. Like many a great soldier, he loved the society of educated men; and this restless adventurer, after sweeping like a pestilence for hundreds of miles across India,

or pouncing like a hawk upon Khwarizm beside the Sea of Aral, and then coursing south to Hamadan, almost within call of Baghdad itself, would settle down to listen to the songs of poets and the wise conversation of divines. If Mahmud is to Moslems for all time a model of a god-fearing king, zealous for the faith, his court has no less deservedly held a pattern of humane culture. Napoleon imported the choicest works of art from the countries he subdued to adorn his Paris; Mahmud did better, he brought the artists and the poets themselves to illuminate his court. From the cities of the Oxus and the shores of the Caspian, from Persia and Khorasan, he pressed into his service the lights of Oriental letters, and compelled them, not unwillingly, to revolve about him like planets in his firmament of glory. The fall of the Samanid dynasty, who had been noble patrons of Persian literature, left many homeless scholars and poets, who flocked with eagerness to the new centre of learning.

The names of the many luminaries who shone at the court of Ghazni may not convey very definite ideas to Western readers, but they are among the leaders of Eastern literature and science, and some have a reputation outside the circle of Orientalists. Al-Biruni, the astronomer, chronologist, and even student of Sanskrit; Al-Farabi, the philosopher, whom Mahmud prized the more since Avicenna himself refused to be lured to Ghazni; Al-Utbi, the historian and secretary to the Sultan; Al-Baihaki, whose gossiping memoirs have earned him the title of "the Oriental Mr. Pepys;"

Unsuri and Farrukhi and Asjudi, among the earliest poets of the Persian revival, and above all Firdausi, the Persian Homer, in whose "Shah Namah" the legendary heroes of ancient Iran live for ever—these were among the men to whom Mahmud was gracious, and who in return made Ghazni and its master renowned beyond the fame of glorious war. There is no need to repeat here the oft-told story of Firdausi's wrath at the silver guerdon with which the Sultan crowned the famous epic. Sixty thousand pieces of silver—even though the poet had been promised gold—represent something like £2,500, and would be a welcome remuneration for a library of epics in the present day. Milton had to be content with the two hundred and fiftieth part of such a sum for "Paradise Lost." The notable part of the story is, not that the poet indignantly spurned the gift, threw it loftily among the menials, and then rewarded Mahmud's kindness and support by a scathing satire—such outbreaks belong to the *genus irritabile*—but that the great Sultan at last forgave the insult and sent a second lavish gift, of 50,000 guineas, to appease the offended poet in his exile. It was the usual irony of fate that, if the Oriental tradition be true, the reward reached Firdausi's home in Khorasan just at the moment when his body was being borne to the grave.

Though one must acquit the Sultan of any want of appreciation of Firdausi's great work, or indeed of literary and scientific achievement in general, tradition will have it that he was avaricious; and there is a

quaint anecdote in Sa'di's "Rose Garden," a tedious but renowned Persian classic, in which it is related how a certain king of Khorasan dreamed that he saw Mahmud a hundred years after his death, and perceived that, whilst his body had crumbled to dust, the eyes still rolled in their sockets, as if seeking the wealth that had vanished from their sight. Yet it is hard to reconcile this reputation for avarice with what is recorded of the Sultan's gifts; his annual grant of two hundred thousand guineas to men of letters; his foundation of a university at Ghazni, endowed with a great library, a museum, salaried professors, and pensions for scholars; his sumptuous mosque of marble and granite, furnished with gold and silver lamps and ornaments and spread with costly carpets; or the aqueducts, fountains, cisterns, and other improvements with which he enriched his capital. If Mahmud was fond of money, assuredly he knew how to spend it wisely and munificently; and the splendour of his courtiers' palaces, vying with his own, testified to the liberal encouragement of the arts which raised Ghazni, under the rule of the Idol-breaker, from a barracks of outlaws to the first rank among the many stately cities of the caliphate.

The man who could so create and develop a centre of civilization was no barbarian. Like many another, Mahmud is said to have devoted himself to the cultivation of his mind in order to efface the impression of his physical defects; but it was no ordinary mind that he had to work upon, and no mean genius that could expand a little mountain principality into an empire

that stretched to the Caspian and Aral Seas and almost to the Tigris, and that covered, at least for the time, half the vast plains and teeming population of Hindustan. Brief as was the occupation of most of this immense territory, it was a stupendous feat of acquisition. He was aided, no doubt, by the dissensions of his neighbours; the break-up of the Samanid kingdom and the divisions of the Buwaihid princes in Persia opened the road to annexation in the west, just as the jealousies of the Indian rajas favoured aggression in the east. But it must not be forgotten that Persia was full of Turkish chiefs of the same warlike temper as Mahmud's forefather's, and that his northern frontier was perpetually menaced by the vigorous and aggressive tribes of Central Asia, against whom, nevertheless, he was always able to hold his own. When Ilak Khan, the chief of the Turks on the Jaxartes, came south to invade Khorasan in 1006 with a great host of his dreaded horsemen, Mahmud did not evade the shock. He led his army in person against the troopers of the steppes, and after bowing to the earth in prayer, which he never forgot before a battle, he mounted his elephant and smote the enemy hip and thigh, driving them back to their own land.

A great soldier, a man of infinite courage and indefatigable energy of mind and body, Mahmud was no constructive or far-seeing statesman. We hear of no laws or institutions or methods of government that sprang from his initiative. Outward order and security was all he attempted to attain in his unwieldy empire;

to organize and consolidate was not in his scheme. He left his dominions so ill knitted together that they began to fall asunder as soon as he was no longer alive to guard them by his vigilant activity. But so long as he lived he strove to govern every part with even justice. The most sagacious and high-minded Asiatic statesman of the middle ages, the famous Seljuk vizir Nizam-al-mulk, in his treatise on the art of government, cites many anecdotes of Mahmud's conscientious exercise of justice and the pains he took to protect his widely scattered subjects. "Mahmud," wrote the great vizir, "was a just sovereign, a lover of learning, a man of generous nature and of pure faith."

CHAPTER III

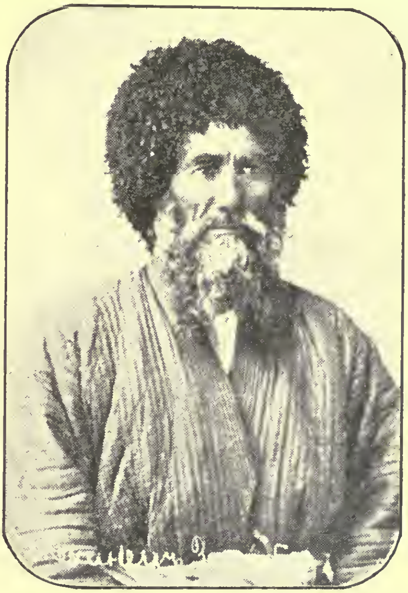
THE MEN OF THE MOUNTAIN

GHAZNI AND GHOR

1030–1206 A.D.

GIBBON sums up the history of Asiatic dynasties as "one unceasing round of valour, greatness, discord, degeneracy, and decay." We have seen the valour and the greatness of Mahmud: the rest was soon to follow. The kingdom he founded endured indeed for a century and a half after his death, but it diminished with every decade. It was not so much the result, however, of the discord and degeneracy of his successors, though discord began at once in the rivalry between his sons, and degeneracy was shown in the luxury and effeminacy of the court. It was rather the inevitable consequence of the increasing pressure of the western Turks, the Ghuzz and other Turkman clans who were pouring into the pastures of Khorasan. What the adventurers of Ghazni had done, others of the same bold and capable race might also achieve, and the pastoral Seljuks, who now flocked from the Oxus lands southward into Persia, were led by chiefs who proved themselves Mahmud's equals in generalship and his superiors in power of organization. Their history, which carried

them from Samarkand to the shores of the Ægean, has no bearing on the present subject, except in so far as their brilliant career of conquest cut off all Mahmud's Persian possessions in less than ten years after the Idol-breaker had passed away from the scene of his triumphs. By 1038 Tughril Beg the Seljuk was proclaimed king of Khorasan, and when Mahmud's son, Mas'ud, at last awakened to the danger of the shepherd clans, whose presence he had tolerated within his borders, and marched in 1040 to subdue the rebels, he was utterly defeated at Dandanakan near Merv, and thenceforward Persia was lost to the house of Ghazni.



A TYPICAL TURKMAN.

The barrier thus set up on the west, whilst it bounded the ambitions of Mahmud's successors, did not immediately throw them into the far more valuable provinces of India. They continued to hold the Panjab, the only part of his Indian conquests that was permanently annexed, but even there their authority was uncertain, and when it was strongest under a firm governor there was most risk of separation. A capable Turkish amir who had witnessed the successful rise of

other Turks in Asia was likely to be tempted to convert his distant Indian province into a kingdom. Troubles of this kind began very soon. Mahmud had left Ali Ariyaruk as governor and commander-in-chief in India. Under Mas'ud, this viceroy's power became dangerous, and he was allured to Ghazni, where his numerous following of truculent retainers confirmed the fears of the court. Like many Turks, Ariyaruk had a weakness for drink, which proved his undoing. The wise vizir, Khwaja Ahmad Hasan Maimandi, who was in Oriental phrase "a great cucumber," or man of guile, led the unlucky general on; the king sent him fifty flagons of wine when he was already excited; the poor wretch staggered into the court, lured on by the conspirators, and there was an end of him.

The whole miserable tragedy is described by the garrulous Baihaki, the chronicler of Mas'ud's court, with the vivid touch of an eye-witness. Such scenes were not uncommon at Ghazni, where zeal for the faith was often combined with a reckless disregard of the law of Islam, which forbids the use of fermented liquor. It was not merely that the soldiery and their officers indulged in drunken brawls; the Sultan Mas'ud himself used to enjoy regular bouts in which he triumphantly saw all his fellow topers "under the table." We read in Baihaki's gossiping memoirs how "the amir"—the Ghazni king adopted this title like his modern representative, the amir of Afghanistan—went into the Firozi Garden and sat in the Green Pavilion on the Golden Plain, where, after a sumptuous feast, the army

passed before him in review: first the star of the crown prince Maudud, next the canopy and standards borne by two hundred slaves of the household, with jerkins of mail and long spears; then many led horses and camels; then the infantry in their order, with banners and stars, and so forth.

When they had all passed by, the serious business of the day began: "let us to it without ceremony," cried the amir; "we are come into the country, and we will drink." Fifty goblets and flagons of wine were brought from the pavilion into the garden, and the cups began to go round. "Fair measure," said the amir, "and equal cups—let us drink fair." They grew merry and the minstrels sang. One of the courtiers had finished five tankards—each held nearly a pint of wine—but the sixth confused him, the seventh bereft him of his sense, and at the eighth he was consigned to his servants. The doctor was carried off at his fifth cup; Khalil Dawud managed ten, Siyabiruz nine, and then they were taken home; everybody rolled or was rolled away, till only the Sultan and the Khawaja Abd-ar-Razzak remained. The khwaja finished eighteen goblets and then rose, saying, "If your slave has any more he will lose both his wits and his respect for your Majesty." Mas'ud went on alone, and after he had drunk twenty-seven full cups, he, too, arose, called for water and prayer-carpet, washed, and recited the belated noon and sunset prayers together as soberly as if he had not tasted a drop; then mounted his elephant and rode to the palace. "I witnessed the whole of

this scene with mine own eyes, I, Abu-l-Fazl," says Baihaki.

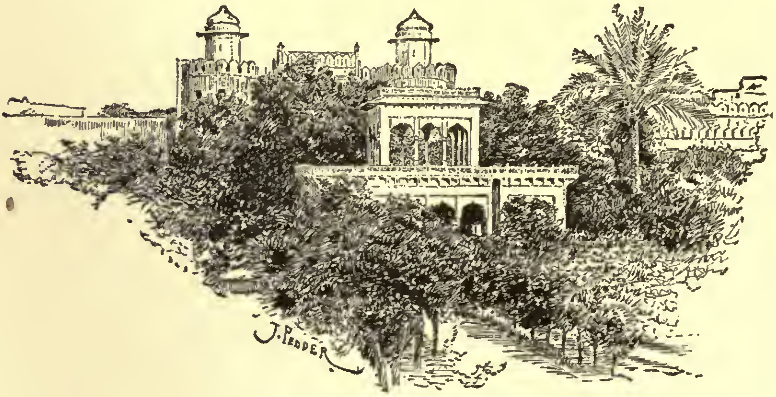
Such orgies were characteristic of the Turkish rulers of Ghazni. Even the great Mahmud had his drinking-fits, which he excused on the ground that they afforded a rest to his people; but his son Mas'ud carried them to far greater excess. Fortunately he had a remarkably able prime minister in Maimandi, who had served the father till he fell under his displeasure, and whom the son released from prison and restored to office with extraordinary marks of respect. The khwaja (to use the title given to the vizirs of Ghazni, though the word properly means a holy man) made his formal re-entrance at the levee at noon, after careful consultation with the astrologers, who determined the auspicious hour. He was dressed in scarlet cloth of Baghdad embroidered with delicate flowers, and wore a large turban of the finest muslin bordered with lace, a heavy chain, and a girdle weighing a thousand gold pieces, studded with turquoises. The captain of the guard, sitting at the door of the robing-room, presented him, according to custom, with a piece of gold, a turban, and two immense turquoises set in a ring. On entering the presence, he was congratulated by the amir, and kissing the ground, offered his sovereign a valuable pendant of pearls. Then Mas'ud gave him the signet of state, engraved with the royal seal, "that the people may know," he said, "that the khwaja's authority is next to my own." The minister kissed hands, bowed to the earth, and retired, escorted by a splendid retinue, and

all the world hastened to congratulate him and make him presents. Two days later he took his seat in his office. A fine cloth of brocade set with turquoises was spread for him, and on it he knelt and went through two bowings of prayer; then calling for ink, paper, and sand, he wrote in Arabic a sentence of thanksgiving. All that day till nightfall gifts were pouring in; gold and silver, rich cloths, slaves of high price, pedigree horses and camels—and all were dutifully sent on to the amir, who marvelled why the khwaja would not keep them, and rewarded him with ten thousand gold pieces, half a million of silver, ten Turkish slaves, four horses from the royal stable, and ten camels.

Meanwhile the minister whom he had superseded presented the reverse of the glittering shield. Not only disgraced, Hasanak was accused of heresy, and sent to the scaffold. Clad in nothing but his turban and trousers, his hands clasped together, "his body like shining silver, his face a picture," he calmly faced his doom. All men wept for him and none would cast the fatal stones. The executioner spared him the indignity of lapidation by a friendly noose. The fallen vizir's head was served up in a dish at a feast, to the horror of the guests; his body hung seven years on the gibbet; but his mother, weeping beneath it, cried aloud in bitter irony, "What good fortune was my son's! Such a king as Mahmud gave him this world, and *such a one* as Mas'ud the next!"

Such pictures of life at Ghazni are valuable for the history of India, since it was on the model of Mah-

mud and his successors that the later courts of Lahore, Agra, and Delhi were formed. It would be a mistake, however, to measure Mas'ud by his luxury and revels. He was no fainéant son of his great father. His generosity won him the name of "the second Ali," and he was so brave that they called him "another Rustam," after the famous hero of the "Shah Namah." His father envied his strength, and it was said that he could



A GARDEN AT LAHORE.

fell an elephant at a blow. No other man could wield his battle-axe. He excelled, moreover, as a patron of letters, and was himself an architect of skill, who adorned his country with noble buildings. He also took a prudent interest in his Indian possessions, and personally inspected the management of the Panjab. The viceroy who succeeded Ariyaruk proved even more ambitious. This Ahmad Niyaltagin had been Mahmud's treasurer and had accompanied him on all his journeys and knew the ways and plans of the late king. They called him Mahmud's "sneeze," or *alter ego*. On his appointment

Benares and the River Ganges

Benares, the holy city of the Hindus, with its temples and shrines lining the shore of the sacred Ganges, was first conquered by the Moslem invaders under Mohammad Ghori, and now mosques dedicated to Allah are seen beside the sanctuaries of the Hindu gods.

as governor of Hindustan he was instructed by the vizir Maimandi not to meddle with political or revenue matters, which belonged to the function of Kadi Shiraz, the civil administrator, but to keep to the duties of commander-in-chief. Besides these military and civil governors, there was the head of the intelligence department to whom all orders from the Sultan and ministers were sent and who reported everything that occurred to his master. "Yet two must not give trouble to the court," continued the khwaja, "what you have to write to me must be stated in detail in order to receive a distinct reply. His Majesty thinks it advisable to send with you some of the Dailami chiefs, to remove them to a distance from the court, since they are foreigners; and also some suspected persons and refractory slaves. Whenever you go on a campaign you must take them with you, but be careful that they do not mingle with the army of Lahore, and let them not drink wine or play polo. Keep spies and informers to watch them, and never neglect this duty. These be the king's secret orders, not to be divulged." To retain a hold on the new viceroy, his son was detained as a hostage.

In spite of all these counsels, Niyaltagin quickly fell out with his civil colleague, and complaints reached Ghazni. Full of the example of his old master, he was not content with managing a mere province, but copied the Idol-breaker's daring raids, and actually surprised Benares. No Mohammedan army had ever before pushed so far east, and the great city on the Ganges

with its forest of temples was a splendid prize. The invaders did not dare to hold it more than a few hours, lest they should be overwhelmed by the Hindus, and before mid-day they had plundered the markets and got off scot free with an immense booty. Niyaltagin was suspected of still more daring schemes; he was said to be buying Turkish slaves secretly, and gave himself out as a son of Sultan Mahmud. Not only was the army of Lahore devoted to him, but Turkmans and adventurers of all sorts were flocking to his standard. The policy of sending suspected and disorderly persons to India was bearing fruit. In short, everything was ripe for rebellion, and in the summer of 1033 news came that the viceroy was in open revolt, the kadi shut up in a fort, and all was turmoil and bloodshed.

To restore order Mas'ud appointed a Hindu, named Tilak, to take over the command in the Panjab. The other generals showed themselves backward in volunteering for the dangerous task, and Tilak's eager bid for the command pleased the Sultan. The fact that a Hindu should have attained such a position shows how far the process of assimilation between the Turks and the Indians had already gone. Tilak was the son of a barber, a good-looking, plausible fellow, eloquent of speech, a fluent writer both in Hindi and Persian, and a master of dissimulation, which he had studied under the best professors in Kashmir, the home of lies. He is also described as "proficient in amours and witchcraft," and every one admired him. He gained a great influence over Mas'ud, who set him over the Indian

troops, and he was equally intimate with the khwaja, who made him his confidential secretary and interpreter. He was granted the distinction of a state tent and parasol, kettle-drums were beaten at his quarters, after the Hindu fashion, and his banners had gilt cusps.

This Hindu paragon set out to chastise Niyaltagin. Matters were going badly and there was anxiety at Ghazni. The Seljuks were beginning to cause serious alarm in the west, and a battle had been lost at Karman in the eastern hills, where the Sultan's Hindu troops, who formed half the cavalry, had behaved like poltroons and fled the field. When they came back, Mas'ud shut their officers up in the chancery, where six of them committed suicide with their daggers. "They should have used those daggers at Karman," said the Sultan. At last the news came that the barber's son had routed Niyaltagin, and that the Jats had caught the fugitive viceroy and cut off his head, which they sold to Tilak for a hundred thousand pieces of silver. The elated Sultan vowed that he would himself go to India and take the fort of Hansi, which he had once before attacked. The ministers in vain tried to dissuade him, urging the troubles in other parts of his empire. If the Seljuks should conquer Khorasan, or take even a village there, they argued, "ten Holy Wars at Hansi would not compensate." But he was immovable. "The vow is upon my back," he said, "and accomplish it I will."

Leaving the khwaja as his deputy, and appointing Prince Maudud viceroy at Balkh, the Sultan set out

for India by way of Kabul in November, 1034. Falling ill on the road, he determined to renounce wine, threw all the liquor he had into the Jihlam, and broke his flagons. No drinking was allowed throughout the army. How slight was the hold of the Moslems on Hindustan may be realized from the fact that the march to Hansi

KABULIS.

(about two-thirds of the distance from Lahore to Delhi) was regarded as a dangerous adventure. The fortress made a desperate resistance, but was mined in five places, and stormed at the point of the sword at the beginning of February. The priests and officers were killed, and the women, children, and treasure were carried to Ghazni. Returning through deep snow,

Mas'ud kept the New Year's spring festival at home, and amply repaid himself for his abstinence on the march.

The state of affairs on his return showed that the campaign with its insignificant result had been a mistake. The ministers had been right in urging him to go west instead of east. Khorasan was rapidly falling into the hands of the Seljuks; Western Persia was throwing off the yoke of Ghazni; the empire was breaking up. Mas'ud attempted too late to stem the tide. His generals were defeated, and his own last despairing effort near Merv in 1040, as has been related, ended in utter rout. In a panic he prepared to fly to India before the terror of a Seljuk invasion. The treasures were packed up, the court and the harem were equipped for the journey, and the whole army left Ghazni. As he crossed the Indus, the dishonoured prince was seized by mutineers, who set on the throne his brother, whom he had blinded on his own accession, and, after a brief captivity in the fort of Kiri, Mas'ud was done to death in 1040. "Let wise men reflect upon this," concludes Baihaki, "and be well assured that man by mere labour and effort, notwithstanding all the wealth and arms and warlike stores he may possess, can in no wise succeed without the help of God Most High. . . . 'Man cannot strive against fate.' This prince spared no effort, and gathered vast armies. Though he was one who thought for himself and spent sleepless nights in devising plans, his affairs came to nought by the decree of the Almighty. God knoweth best."

The hasty flight to India was premature. The Seljuks were busy in subduing Persia, and left Ghazni undisturbed; thither, after a while, Mas'ud's son returned with the army, and for more than a century the Ghaznavids, as his descendants are called, dwelt in their mountain city with gradually decaying power. Their names and dates are given in the table at the end of this volume, but their individual reigns are of little importance for the history of India. They are described as men of benevolent character and signal piety; and some of them, such as Ibrahim, devoted themselves to the improvement and good government of their subjects. The fact that Ibrahim and Bahram sat on the throne, the one for over forty, the other for thirty-five years, shows that there was peace and stability, at least in the central government.

But peace was purchased at the cost of power. The later kings of Ghazni, learning by a series of defeats that their western neighbours were not to be trifled with, made terms with the Seljuks and allied the two dynasties by politic marriages, thus reducing Ghazni from the proud position of the capital of a kingdom to little more than a dependency of the empire of Malik Shah. The fratricidal struggles, which were a common feature of Ghaznavid successions, even brought these dangerous Turkish neighbours into the mountains, and in 1116 we find the Seljuk Sanjar in temporary possession of Ghazni as the protector of Bahram against his brother Arslan Shah.

There was little danger, however, of the enemy set-

A MODERN AFGHAN.

From Roskoschny's Afghanistan.

tling permanently in the Afghan country. There was more attractive land to the west, and a dynasty that had spread its dividing branches to the Mediterranean and Damascus was not likely to be enamoured of the crags and glades beneath the Hindu Kush. So long as the kings of Ghazni preserved an attitude of decorous deference, there was little fear of Seljuk aggression. Nor was there much danger of reprisals from the side of India. An army of eighty thousand Hindus did indeed seize Lahore in 1043; but the enemy hastily withdrew on the approach of the forces of Ghazni. The terror of Mahmud's campaigns had left too crushing an impression to permit the Indians to dream of serious retaliation. The Panjab remained a Moslem province, and a century later became the last refuge of Mahmud's descendants.

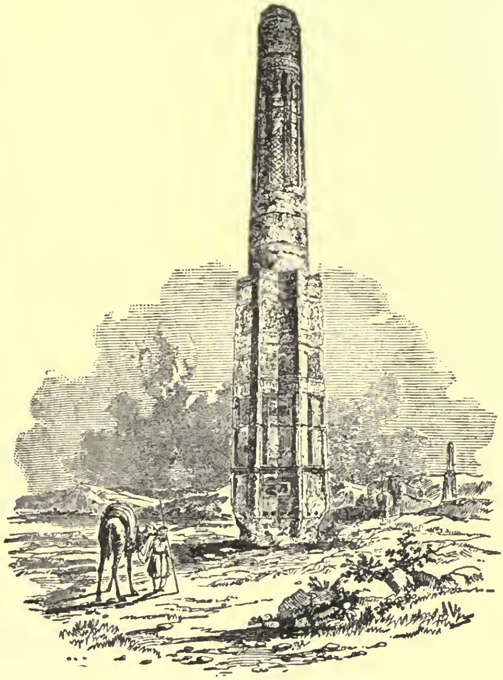
The force that uprooted the Ghaznavids came neither from the east nor from the west. It grew up in their midst. In the rugged hills of Ghor, between Ghazni and Herat, stood the castle of Firoz-kuh, the "Hill of Victory," where a bold race of Afghan highlanders followed the banner of the chief of Sur. The castle had submitted to Mahmud in 1010, but the conqueror left the native chief in tributary possession, and the Suri horsemen eagerly took the Sultan's pay and fought in his campaigns against the infidels. These fiery hillmen respected the great soldier, but for his weak successors they cared little, and feared them less. A conflict was brought about by the death of one of the Suri chiefs at the hands of Bahram Shah. The high-

landers of Ghor marched to avenge his murder, and their rude vigour so overmastered the troops of Ghazni, enfeebled by a century of inglorious ease, that Bahram and his army were driven pell-mell into India (1148). It is true he returned with fresh forces in the winter, when snow cut off the usurpers from their headquarters in Ghor, but the vengeance he took upon the intruders and the execution of their leader only heated the fury of the chief of Firoz-kuh.

Two brothers of the princely race of Sur had now successively been slain by the King of Ghazni: a third brother avenged them. In 1155 Ala-ad-din Husain, reprobated for all time by the title of "World-burner" (Jahan-soz), burst into Ghazni on an errand of slaughter and destruction, slew the men without mercy, enslaved the women and children, and carried fire and sword throughout the land. Of all the noble buildings with which the kings had enriched their stately capital hardly a stone was left to tell of its grandeur. The very graves of the hated dynasty were dug up and the royal bones scattered to the dogs, yet even Afghan vengeance spared the tomb of Mahmud, the idol of Moslem soldiers. That tomb and two lofty minarets, at a little distance from the modern town, alone stand to show that Ghazni was. On one of the minarets one may still read the resonant titles of the Idol-breaker, and on the marble tombstone an inscription entreats "God's mercy for the great Amir Mahmud."

India was now to witness something very like a repetition of his swift irresistible raids. For more than

a century there had been, if not peace, at least little war. The later kings of Ghazni had been mild, unambitious rulers, and had left the Panjab very much to itself. Probably their Hindu troops and Hindu officials had to some extent Indianized them, and the last descendants of Mahmud made their home at Lahore without difficulty. The attempt of Bahram's son, Khusru Shah, to recover the command in Afghanistan failed utterly; he found Ghazni and the other towns in ruins, the tribes disloyal, and the Ghuzz Turkmans overrunning the land. The comparatively orderly rule of the kings of Ghazni had given place to anarchy, and so it remained for many years. Ala-ad-din, the "World-burner," was content to rule his clan at Firoz-kuh; but after his death in 1161, and that of his son two years later, his nephew Ghiyas-ad-din ibn Sam became chief of Ghor, and with his accession the Afghan highlanders entered upon a new phase of activity. Ghiyas-ad-din



A COLUMN AT GHAZNI.

recovered Ghazni from the mob of Ghuzz in 1173-4, and established his brother Mu'izz-ad-din on the ruined throne of Mahmud. The two brothers exercised a joint sovereignty, but while the elder maintained his hereditary chiefdom in his forefathers' castle of the "Hill of Victory," Mu'izz-ad-din, commonly known as Mohammad Ghori, led a series of campaigns in India which recalled the glorious days of the Idol-breaker nearly two centuries before. For thirty years Mahmud had ravaged Hindustan from the Indus to the Ganges; and for thirty years Mohammad Ghori harried the same country in the same way.

COIN OF GHIYAS-AD-DIN, SHOWING SPEARMAN ON ELEPHANT.

His first object was to gather the Mohammedan provinces of India under his control. He began with the old Arab colony on the Indus, took Multan in 1175 from the heretical Karmathians, whom Mahmud had but temporarily dislodged, marched thence to Anhalwara in 1178, and by 1182 he had subdued the whole of Sind down to Daibul and the seacoast. Meanwhile his armies had not left the exiled King of Ghazni undisturbed. Peshawar was taken in 1179, and Khusru Malik, the last of the Ghaznavids, a feeble, gentle soul, utterly unequal to the task of mastering the anarchy which was ruining the remnant of his fathers' kingdom, hastened to give his son as a hostage and to offer deprecatory presents to the invader. The final catastrophe was thus delayed for a few years. In 1184, how-

ever, Mohammad Ghori ravaged the territory of Lahore and fortified Sialkot. This was coming to close quarters, and the king in desperation called in the help of the Gakkars and laid siege to the fortress. The Ghorian outmanœuvred him by a trick, and getting between Khusru and his capital, compelled him to surrender (1185 or 1186). The prisoner and his son were taken to Firoz-kuh and confined in a fort, where after five years the last of the Ghaznavids were put to death.

Mohammad Ghori had thus rid himself of all Moslem rivals in India: he could now turn to the Hindus. From the accounts of the Persian historians, it is clear that the process of assimilation which had been going on between the Turkish conquerors and the subject Hindus was now checked. The policy of employing native Indian regiments was abandoned, and the new invaders, Afghan Moslems, numerously supported by Turks, were full of religious zeal, and eager to send the "grovelling crow-faced Hindus to the fire of hell." Mohammad's first step was to seize and garrison Sirhind. This brought upon him the whole force of the Rajputs, led by Prithivi Raja, the chief of the Chohan dynasty that had succeeded the Tomaras in Delhi and Ajmir. These were a different kind of enemy from those the Afghans had been accustomed to meet. They were well acquainted with the modes of fighting of the Seljuks and other Turks of the Oxus land, but in the Rajputs they encountered a soldiery second to none in the world, a race of born fighters who fought to the death, and many of whose principalities never submitted in more

than name to Moslem rule. They formed the military caste of the ancient Hindu system and preserved their old feudal system.

"Each division," as Elphinstone remarks, "had its hereditary leader, and each formed a separate community, like clans in other countries, the members of which were bound by many ties to their chief and to each other. As the chiefs of those clans stood in the same relation to the raja as their own retainers did to them, the king, nobility, and soldiery all made one body, united by the strongest feelings of kindred and military devotion. The sort of feudal system that prevailed among the Rajputs gave additional stability to this attachment, and all together produced the pride of birth, the high spirit, and the romantic notions so striking in the military class of that period. Their enthusiasm was kept up by the songs of their bards, and inflamed by frequent contests for glory or for love. They treated women with a respect unusual in the East, and were guided, even toward their enemies, by rules of honour which it was disgraceful to violate." With much of the chivalry, they had not the artificial sentiment of the knights of the "Faerie Queene," and, save for their native indolence, they resembled rather the heroes of the Homeric poems, or of their own *Mahābhārata*, than those of the Round Table. No doubt they had degenerated in a long period of inglorious obscurity, but what the Rajputs are in the present day may teach us that in the twelfth century they were a brilliant and formidable array.

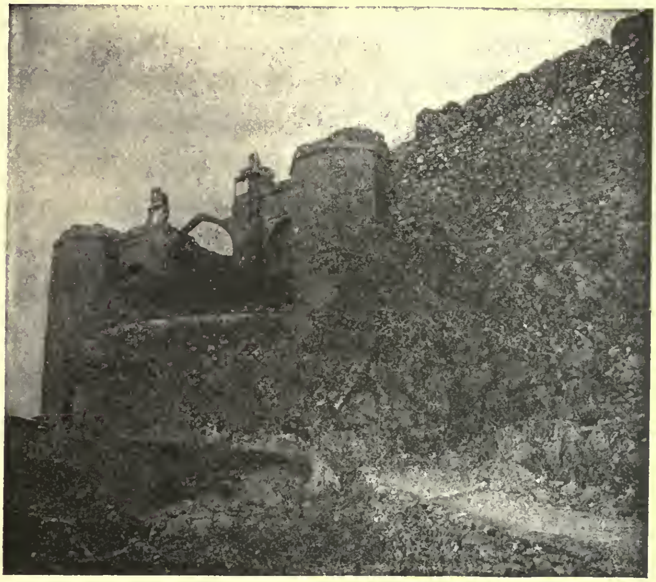
Mohammad Ghori's first encounter with the Rajputs was like to have been his last. The two armies met in 1191 at Narain, ten miles north of Karnal, on another part of the great plain which includes the historic field of Panipat, and on which the fate of India has been decided again and again. All the dash of the Moslem cavalry was powerless against the Hindus. The Afghan charges were met by skilful flanking movements, and the Sultan found himself cut off from his shattered wings and hemmed in by Rajput squadrons. He tried to save the day by personal gallantry, charged up to the standard of the raja's brother, the viceroy of Delhi, and with his spear drove his teeth down his throat; but his rash exposure nearly cost him his life, and he was saved only by the devotion of a Khalji retainer who mounted behind him and carried him off the field. The Sultan's retirement led to a panic. The Moslems were soon in full retreat, pursued for forty miles by the enemy, and Mohammad did not even stop at Lahore, but hastened to cross the Indus into his own country. Never had the armies of Islam been so worsted by the infidels.

The Sultan could not forget the disaster. At Ghazni, he confessed, "he never slumbered in ease nor waked but in sorrow and anxiety." The next year saw him again in India, at the head of 120,000 men, Afghans, Turks, and Persians. Prithivi Raja had taken Sirhind, after a year's siege, and awaited his enemy on the same field of Narain. The Sultan had profited by his former lesson. His cavalry in four divisions of ten thousand

each harassed the Rajputs on all sides, and when he found their famous soldiery still unbroken he lured them to disorder by a feigned retreat. Then, taking them at a disadvantage, he charged at the head of twelve thousand picked horsemen in steel armour, and "this prodigious army once shaken, like a great building, tottered to its fall and was lost in its own ruins." Many of the Rajput chiefs were killed in the battle. Prithivi Raja himself mounted a horse and fled, but was captured near Sirsuti and "sent to hell."

The result of this victory was the annexation of Ajmir, Hansi, and Sirsuti, ruthless slaughter, and a general destruction of temples and idols and building of mosques (1192). Ajmir was left in charge of a son of the late raja, as a vassal of the Sultan, and Kutb-ad-din Aybek, a slave of Mohammad Ghori, was appointed viceroy of India, where, after his master's death, he founded the kingdom of Delhi. There was much, however, to be done before there could be any talk of kingship. Delhi and Koil indeed fell before the attacks of Kutb-ad-din the same year, but beyond them lay the dominions of the powerful Rathors, who had become rajas of Kanauj on the downfall of the Tomaras. Mohammad, returning from Ghazni, himself led the campaign against them in the following year, and, after a crushing defeat on the Jumna between Chandwar and Etawa, the Rathors fled south to found a new principality at Marwar, and Kanauj and Benares became part of the empire of Ghor. The Moslems were now in Bihar, and it was not long before they found their way into

Bengal. Whilst Kutb-ad-din was reducing the cities farther west, another general, Mohammad Bakhtiyar, pushed his way to Oudh and on to Lakhnauti, then the capital of Bengal, where its ruins are still identified with those of Gaur near Maldah, and thus brought the extreme east of Hindustan under Moslem rule.



FORT OF AJMIR.

Meanwhile the Sultan or his viceroy had conquered, if they had not subdued, the greater part of Northern India. Gwalior, Badaun, Kalpi, Kalinjar, and Anhalwara had fallen, and if Mohammad had been content with an Indian empire he might have enjoyed his wish. But the kings of Ghazni were ever looking backward toward the west, where Mahmud had held so vast a sway. Tradition led them to long for the orchards and fat pastures

of the Oxus and the rich cities and luxury of Persia. The wealth of India could not satisfy these hungry hillmen. Mohammad Ghori must needs invade Khwarizm, the modern Khiva, where his momentary success was followed by such disastrous defeat that he burned his baggage, barely purchased his life, and fled (1203). Such an overthrow means anarchy in an Oriental state. Everywhere the tribes and governors rose in revolt. Ghazni shut its gates in its Sultan's face, Multan proclaimed a new king, the Gakkars seized Lahore and laid waste the Panjab; the wide dominion of the house of Ghor was shattered. The recovery of his disrupted kingdom was Mohammad's greatest feat. Kutb-ad-din remained true to him, and so did several cities held by the Sultan's kindred. Mohammad swept down upon Multan and regained it; Ghazni repented; the Gakkars were subdued and even nominally converted. Conversion did not wipe out the blood-feud, however, and when the Sultan set out once more to gather forces for another effort to realize his useless dream of western empire, he was murdered in his tent on the banks of the Indus by a band of Gakkars who had the deaths of their kinsfolk to avenge (1206).

Compared with Mahmud, the name of Mohammad Ghori has remained almost obscure. He was no patron of letters, and no poets or historians vied with one another to praise his munificence and power. Yet his conquests in Hindustan were wider and far more permanent than Mahmud's. A large part of these conquests were of course partial, and there were still revolts

to be crushed and chiefs to be subdued: India was not to be subjugated in a generation. But the conquest was real and permanent, and though Mohammad was no Indian sovereign, but still King of Ghazni with eyes turned toward Persia and the Oxus, he left a viceroy in Hindustan who began the famous Slave dynasty, the first of the many Moslem kings that have ruled India.

Of the two tides of Mohammedan invasion that surged into India, Mahmud's had left little trace. It had been but a series of triumphant raids, and when

SILVER COIN OF MOHAMMAD GHORI, STRUCK AT GHAZNI, A. H. 596 (A. D. 1199).

its violence was spent, scarcely enough strength remained to hold a single province. That province, however, had been held, not without a struggle, and in the Panjab Mohammad Ghori found the necessary base from which to bear upon a wider territory than his precursor. He rose from even smaller beginnings than Mahmud, but his followers possessed the same hardihood and power of endurance as the earlier invaders from the identical mountain valleys, and they carried their arms farther and left surer footprints. The dynasty of Ghor relapsed into the insignificance of a highland chiefdom after its great Sultan's death; but the

dominion it had conquered in India was not lost to Islam. It was consolidated under other rulers, and from the days of Mohammad Ghori to the catastrophe of the Indian mutiny there was always a Mohammedan king upon the throne of Delhi.

CHAPTER IV

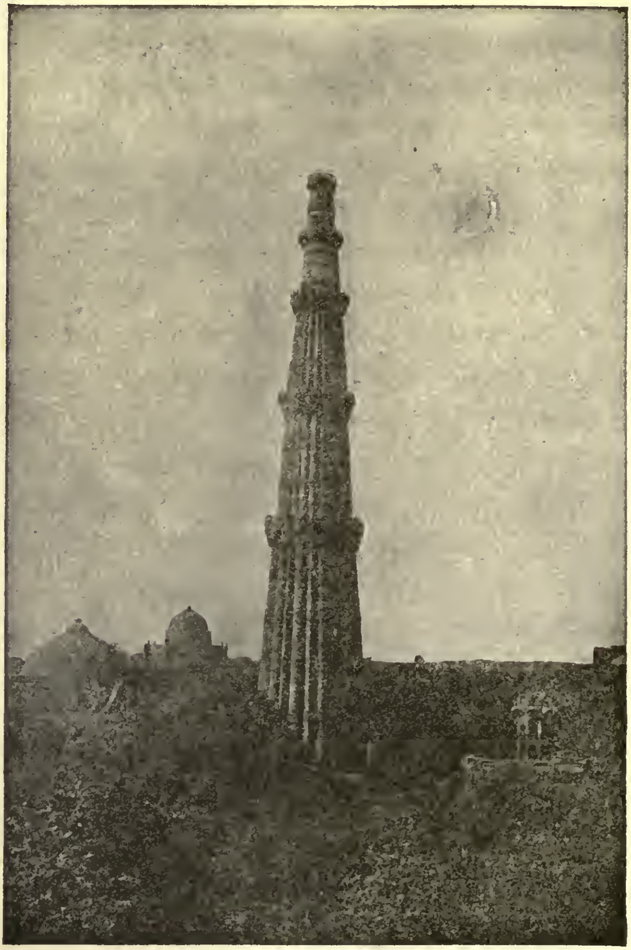
THE SLAVE KINGS

THE TURKS IN DELHI

1206–1290 A.D.

IN 1206 India at length had a Mohammedan king of its own, ruling not from an outside capital, but in India itself. Mohammad Ghori's viceroy Aybek was the first of the thirty-four Moslem kings who ruled at Delhi from the beginning of the thirteenth century to the invasion of Babar in 1526. These thirty-four monarchs fall into five successive dynasties. First came the Slave Kings, all Turks, descended from Aybek the slave of Ghori, or from Aybek's slaves. Next followed the Khaljis, probably Turks in origin, but essentially Afghans in association and character. The third was the Turkish house of Taghlak. The irruption of Timur, who burst into India in 1398, put an end to the domination of the Taghlak princes, and broke up the kingdom of Delhi; but the dynasty of the Sayyids or "nobles"—so called because, though natives of India, they claimed Arabian descent from the family of the Prophet Mohammed—assumed authority at the capital. The fifth dynasty was that of the Afghan Lodis, who held

what remained of the kingdom until they were defeated by the Emperor Babar on the fatal field of Panipat.



THE KUTB MINAR AT DELHI.

In tracing the history of these three centuries of predominant Turkish rule in India we shall have little to say about anything but a few conspicuous men. His-

tory in the East does not mean the growth of constitutions, the development of civic "rights," the vindication of individual liberty, or the evolution of self-government. These are Western ideas which have no meaning in India. If translated into Hindustani they represent nothing that the natural Hindu comprehends or desires. The European assumption that every man is more or less competent to carry on the work of government is flatly denied in the East. The Western panacea of self-government possesses no attraction to the unsophisticated Oriental. To the Hindu, power is a divine gift, to be exercised absolutely by God's anointed, and obeyed unquestioned by every one else. A king who is not absolute loses in the Oriental mind the essential quality of kingship. Every Eastern people, if left to itself, sets up a despot, to whose decrees of life and death it submits with the same resignation and assent that it shows toward the *fiat* of destiny. In the East the King is the State—*l'état c'est moi*—its ministers are his instruments, its people are his slaves. His worst excesses and most savage cruelties are endured in the same way as plague and famine; all belong to the irresistible and inscrutable manifestations of the divine order of the universe. The only kind of king that the East tolerates with difficulty is the fainéant. Let him be strong and masterful, and he may do as he pleases; but the weak sovereign rarely keeps his throne long, and holds it only by force of traditional loyalty or dread of the unknown risks of revolution.

In the history of Mohammedan India, then, we have

to do with kings and their works. They are surrounded by a court of officers and functionaries, who are exalted or abased at the royal pleasure. Beneath them toil incessantly the millions of patient peasants and industrious townsfolk. These people have not changed in any essential characteristic since the dawn of history. They have witnessed the successive inroads of horde after horde of invading foreigners, and have incorporated some part of each new element into their ancient system. They have obeyed the king, whether Aryan, Hun, Greek, Persian, Rajput, Turk, Afghan, Mongol, or English, with the same inveterate resignation, contented, or at least not very discontented, with their immemorial village system and district government, which corrected to some extent the contrasts of successive foreign innovators. Whatever king may rule —so the Hindu would resignedly argue—there will still be plague and famine and constant but not energetic labour, and so long as rice and millet grow and salt is not too dear, life is much the same and the gods may be propitiated. The difference caused in the peasant's life by a good or a bad king is too slight to be worth discussing. The good and the bad are alike things of a day; they pass away as life passes when the king decrees a death or massacres a village; but others follow and the world goes on, and the will of God is eternal.

The kings whose deeds are to be described were foreigners in origin, but this made little if any difference in the respect which their authority implied. There

Arabesque Carving around the Base of the Kutb-Minar.
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was of course as great a contrast between a Moslem Turk and a Hindu Rajput as between a Scotch Presbyterian and a Spanish Catholic; but the reverence paid to power overbore all distinctions of race. The caste system had accustomed Indians to immovable barriers between classes, and though the Moslem kings had no claim of pedigree and not much distinction of ceremonial purity, they formed in a way a caste, the caste of Islam, a fellowship of equal brotherhood unsurpassed in coherence and strength in all the world. The great power of Islam as a missionary influence in India has been due to the benefits of this caste. The moment an Indian accepts Islam he enters a brotherhood which admits no distinctions of class in the sight of God, and every advancement in office and rank and marriage is open to him. To those outside Islam the yoke of the alien ruler was no worse than that of the native raja. Both represented a separate caste, and both belonged to the inscrutable workings of providence.

The essential union of the Moslems as a conquering caste was indeed the chief cause of their successful hold of the vastly preponderating multitudes they governed. Their power in India was always that of an armed camp, but it was a camp in which all the soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder for the same cause, in which all were brothers; and it had the immense advantage of being able to draw continually and in unlimited numbers upon the recruiting-grounds of the Mohammedan countries behind it, which were always reinforcing their co-religionists by fresh bodies of hardy

adventurers, free from the lethargy of self-indulgence that too often etiolates the exotic in the Indian forcing-house. The very bigotry of their creed was an instrument of self-preservation; in mere self-defence they must hold together as God's elect in the face of the heathen, and they were forced to win over proselytes from the Hindus, whether by persuasion or by the sword, to swell their isolated minority. Hence the solidarity and the zeal which, added to their greater energy and versatility, gave the Moslems their superiority over natives who were sometimes their equals in courage, though never in unity, in enthusiasm, or in persistence. The clannishness of the Hindus, their devotion to local chiefs, and their ineradicable jealousies of each other, prevented anything approaching national patriotism; and their religious system, which rested upon birth and race and class, whilst precluding the very idea of proselytism, deprived them of the zeal of the missionary. Moreover they were always on the defensive, and except behind ramparts the defensive position is the weaker part. The Moslems, inspired by the spirit of adventure, of militant propaganda, of spreading the Kingdom of God upon earth, as well as seizing the goods of this world, had every advantage over the native Hindus, and when the invaders were led by kings who embodied these masterful qualities, their triumph was assured.

The example of such a warrior king as Mohammad Ghori bred heroic followers. Whatever may be said against the slave system, it tends in the East to the

production of great men. While a brilliant ruler's son is apt to be a failure, the slaves of a real leader of men have often proved the equals of their master. The reason of course is that the son is a mere speculation. He may or may not inherit his father's talents; even if he does, the very success and power of the father create an atmosphere of luxury that does not encourage effort; and, good or bad, the son is an immovable fixture: only a father with an exceptional sense of public duty would execute an incompetent son to make room for a talented slave. On the other hand the slave is the "survival of the fittest;" he is chosen for physical and mental abilities, and he can hope to retain his position in his master's favour only by vigilant effort and hard service. Should he be found wanting, his fate is sealed.

The famous Seljuk empire furnished a notable example of the influence of a great man upon his slaves. The mamluk guard of the emperor Malik Shah formed a school of capable rulers. However servile in origin, the pedigree carried with it no sense of ignominy. In the East a slave is often held to be better than a son, and to have been the slave of Malik Shah constituted a special title of respect. The great slave vassals of the Seljuks were as proud and honourable as any bastards of mediæval aristocracy; and when they in turn assumed kingly powers, they inherited and transmitted to their lineage the high traditions of their former lords. The same process was seen in the great slave leaders who were among the earliest Mamluk Sultans of Egypt in the thirteenth century; and an equally

conspicuous example is found in India in the slaves of Mohammad Ghori. When some one condoled with him on his lack of male offspring to carry on his line, he replied, "Have I not thousands of children in my Turkish slaves?" Four of his mamluks rose to high command: Yildiz in the Afghan mountains, Kubacha on the Indus, Bakhtiyar in Bengal, and Aybek at Delhi. Of these Kutb-ad-din Aybek was the chief. Brought as a child, like so many slaves of the period, from Turkistan to Khorasan, he was well-educated by his owner, the chief kadi of Naishapur, and when grown up he was sent in a merchant's caravan to Ghazni, where he was purchased by Mohammad Ghori. His brave and generous character soon won him favour, and rising step by step to be master of the horse, he accompanied the Sultan in his campaigns, was taken prisoner in Khwarizm and fortunately recaptured; and after the defeat of Prithivi Raja of Ajmir the government of India was confided to the successful slave.

BILLON COIN OF YILDIZ.

Aybek's chief exploits were achieved during his viceroyalty. Hansi, Mirat, Delhi (1191), Rantambhor, and Koil fell before his assault, and he led the vanguard of the Ghorian army in 1194 when it conquered Benares. When the Sultan returned to Ghazni after this crowning triumph, it was Aybek who subdued the ill-timed revolt of the vassal raja of Ajmir. Master and slave humbled the pride of Gwalior, that "pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind," and compelled the raja Solankhpal

to render tribute in 1196; and in the following year Aybek won a signal victory over the vast array of the prince of Anhalwara, who left fifty thousand dead on the field, while twenty thousand prisoners and immense booty fell into the Moslems' hands. Thus the kingdom of Gujarat came under the power of Ghor. Kalinjar, the seat of the Chandel rajas, after a desperate resistance, fell before Aybek's attack in 1202; its temples were turned into mosques and fifty thousand men put on the "collar of slavery." At the same time Mohammad Bakhtiyar, who for the first time had carried the Moslem arms across Bihar into Bengal, and made Lakhnauti his capital, brought his spoils and his homage to the great viceroy. The energy of Aybek and Bakhtiyar had completed the successes of Mohammad Ghori, and nearly all Hindustan north of the Vindhya range was under Moslem sway.

What that sway meant we know only from the chroniclers of the conquering races. According to Hasan Nizami, who wrote at Delhi in the midst of these campaigns and knew Aybek well, the viceroy administered his wide provinces "in the ways of justice" and "the people were happy." Tribute and military service were exacted as the price of toleration, and Aybek's impartiality is extolled in the metaphorical phrase that "the wolf and the sheep drank water out of the same pond." "The roads were freed from robbers," and the Hindus both "high and low were treated with royal benignity," which, however, did not prevent the viceroy from making an immense number of slaves in his wars. So

munificent was he that he was called "Lakhbakhsh," or "Giver of lacs" (hundreds of thousands). At Delhi he busied himself in building the great mosque, or Jum'ah Masjid, and the famous minaret known after his surname as the Kutb Minar, which was originally 250 feet high and is the tallest minaret in the world. Its boldly jutting balconies, alternate angular and rounded fluting, and fine Arabic inscriptions set off the natural contrasts of white marble and red sandstone of which it is built. The mosque, like Aybek's other mosque at Ajmir, was constructed of the materials of demolished temples, and the ornament was supplied from the idols of the Hindus. Aybek was a staunch Moslem, and if tolerant from policy towards great Hindu vassals, he was a mighty "fighter in the way of God." "The realm was filled with friends and cleared of foes," says a contemporary chronicler, "his bounty was continuous, and so was his slaughter."

Aybek survived his master only a few years, and his own full sovereignty as the first Slave Sultan of Delhi ended in 1210, when he died from a fall from his horse while playing mall or polo, an ancient and favourite sport in Persia and India. A time of confusion followed. An incompetent son opened the way to rivals. Kubacha held Multan and Sind as far as the mouth of the Indus, and strove with Yildiz for the possession of Lahore; Bakhtiyar's successor was supreme in Bihar and Bengal; and Shams-ad-din Altamish (a corruption of the Turkish Il-tutmish, "Hand-grasper"), a slave of Aybek, deposed his master's son

and took the throne of Delhi for himself. Altamish is the true founder of the dynasty of the Slave Kings, which Aybek did not live long enough to consolidate. The new leader was a Turk of Albari, unequalled (says his contemporary, Minhaj-as-siraj) "in beauty, virtue, intelligence, and nobility" of character. "No king so benevolent, sympathetic, reverent to the learned and the old, ever rose by his own efforts to the cradle of empire." Taken to Ghazni in his youth, he was purchased by Aybek, who carried him to Delhi, made him captain of his guard, and eventually governor of Gwalior in 1196. What Aybek had been to Mohammad Ghori, Altamish was to Aybek, who treated him as a son. When Aybek's real son proved unfit to rule, the chiefs of the army begged Altamish to take the throne.

POLO IN ANCIENT PERSIA.
From the Columbia University MS. of the Shah Namah.

It was a stormy advent. Yildiz indeed, ruling at Ghazni, saw the wisdom of conciliation, and sent him the sceptre and umbrella of state; but Kubacha refused

THE GREAT MOSQUE OF AJMIR, WITH INSCRIPTION OF ALTAMISH.

to surrender Lahore, and it was not till 1217 that Altamish obtained possession of the Northern Panjab by the defeat of his rival. These contests were as nothing compared with the tumult to come. A new and incalculable danger threatened all Asia. The hordes of Chingiz Khan, "the Scourge of God," had begun to overflow

their steppes; and the first sign of the Mongols' approach was the flight of Yildiz into India, driven by the broken armies of the shah of Khwarizm, themselves flying panic-stricken before the victorious savages. One after the other they came down from the mountain passes: first the Turkish governors, then the Khwarizmian fugitives, and hard on their heels the dreaded Mongols. Jalal-ad-din, the last shah of Khwarizm and heir of an empire which once had spread from Otrar and Khiva, and from Samarkand and Bokhara to Herat and Isfahan, retreated, fighting his way to the Indus, whither Chingiz pursued him, beat him (1221), and drove him, still dauntless, into Sind. The adventures of this heroic prince, who battled his way back through Persia, only to succumb at last after a decade of daring and energetic fighting, form a stirring page of romantic history.

The tumult was tremendous, but the storm passed away as quickly as it came. The Mongols wintered and then retired: fortunately for India their eyes were set westward. Out of this turmoil Altamish emerged stronger than before. Yildiz and Kubacha disappeared from history: the one died in prison; the other, after many a struggle with the forces, Mongol and Khwarizmian, that in turn ravaged his border-provinces, at last saw his chief cities falling before the siege of Altamish, and in his despair drowned himself in the Indus (1230). Before this the King of Delhi had marched into Bengal (1225) and received the homage of the governor, who had not only attained independent power but pro-

claimed it by his coinage. The whole of the dominions of Aybek were now in the hands of his slave, and expeditions into Malwa as far as Ujjain completed, in 1234, the submission of all India north of the Vindhyas.

The seal was set on a career of unvaried success when, in 1229, the caliph of Baghdad sent an embassy of state to invest Altamish with the robe of office as recognized sovereign of India. Thenceforth the king inscribed upon his coins not only the proud legend, "The Mighty Sultan, Sun of the Empire and the Faith, Conquest-laden, Il-tutmish," but also "Aid of the Commander of the Faithful," Nasir-Amir-al-Muminin. The broad silver pieces on which these titles appeared were new to the currency of India. Hitherto the invaders had issued small billon coins of the native form, inscribed with their names in Sanskrit and sometimes in Arabic characters, and bearing symbols familiar to the Hindus, such as the bull of Siva and the Chohan horsemen. Altamish was the first to introduce a purely Arabic coinage, such as had long been in use in countries farther west, and to adopt as his standard coin the silver tanka, the ancestor of the rupee, weighing 175 grains, and thus exactly corresponding to the English florin. Gold tankas of the same weight were introduced somewhat later by Balban.

For ten years after the death of Altamish, in 1236, his kingdom suffered from the weakness and depravity of his sons. The first, Firoz Shah, was a handsome, generous, soft-hearted, convivial young fool, who spent

his money upon singers and buffoons and worse, and swaying drunk upon his elephant through the bazars showered red gold upon the admiring crowd. "God forgive him," says the chronicler of his time, "sensuality, frivolity, and the company of the lewd and base bring an empire to ruin." His mother, a Turkish slave, managed the government while her son wantoned, till her savage cruelty caused a general revolt. The pair were imprisoned, and Firoz died after a nominal reign

SILVER COIN OF ALTAMISH.

of not quite seven months. His sister Raziyat-ad-din ("Devoted to the Faith") was chosen in his place. She was the only child after her father's heart. "Sultana Raziya," says the same chronicler, who knew her, "was a great monarch: wise, just, generous, a benefactor to her realm, a dispenser of equity, the protector of her people, and leader of her armies; she had all kingly qualities except sex, and this exception made all her virtues of no effect in the eyes of men, God's benison upon her!" Altamish had perceived her great qualities, trusted her with power, and named her his heir. When the astonished ministers remonstrated against the unprecedented idea of setting a woman on a Moslem throne, he said, "My sons are given over

to the follies of youth: none of them is fit to be king and rule this country, and you will find there is no one better able to do so than my daughter."

Raziya sat on the throne of Delhi for only three years and a half (1236-40). She did her best to prove

TOMB OF ALTAMISH AT DELHI.

herself a man, wore manly dress, and showed her face fearlessly as she rode her elephant at the head of her troops. But nothing could convince the Turkish chiefs that a woman could or should lead them. The Arabian Prophet had truly said that "the most precious thing in the world is a virtuous woman," but he had also said that "the people that makes a woman its ruler will not find salvation." Raziya was clearly impossible, and her preference for the Abyssinian Yakut, though

perfectly innocent so far as any evidence goes, roused the jealousy of the dominant Turks.

The slave system had grown stronger by the successful careers of Aybek and Altamish. The latter had formed a corps of Turkish mamluks known as "the Forty," and these men, profiting by the removal of their sovereign's hand, shared among themselves the wealth and power of the kingdom. The free-born men who had served Altamish with great ability in various offices were removed, and all control was in the hands of "the Forty." These Turko-Afghan nobles, called khans, or "lords," were not likely to endure the insult of seeing an Abyssinian set over them by a partial woman. They rose in rebellion, and though at first the gallant queen made head against them, she was finally taken prisoner by the rebel governor Altuniya, in 1240. Even then she subdued her captor and became his queen, and the two set forth to regain her throne. But her brother was already proclaimed in her stead; her army was beaten; and Raziya and her husband, deserted by their troops, fled into the jungles and were killed.

There is no need to dwell upon the brief and inglorious reigns of Bahram and Mas'ud, the one a brother, the other a nephew, of Raziya. The former is described as "a fearless, intrepid, and sanguinary man: still he had some virtues—he was shy and unceremonious, and had no taste for gorgeous attire." His two years of power were spent in plots and counterplots, treacherous executions, and cruel murders, and he was killed after a siege of Delhi by the exasperated

army. The next, Mas'ud, "acquired the habit of seizing and killing his nobles," and spent his time in abandoned pleasures. It was no time for weak rulers, for the Mongols were again on the march, and had massacred the inhabitants of Lahore in December, 1241, establishing themselves on the Indus with every appearance of permanent conquest.

At this juncture another remarkable slave came to the rescue of the state. The nominal king was Nasir-ad-din, a third son of Altamish; but the reins of power

SILVER COIN OF QUEEN RAZIYA, STRUCK AT LAKHNAUTI.

were in the strong hands of Balban. He was a Turk of the same district as Altamish, and boasted his descent from the Khakans of Albari; his father ruled ten thousand *kibitkas*, or tents of nomad families, and his kinsmen still governed their ancestral tribes in Turkistan. But Balban was not to enjoy such obscure distinction. "The Almighty desired to grant a support to the power of Islam and to the strength of the Mohammedan faith, to extend His glorious shadow over it, and to preserve Hindustan within the range of His favour and protection. He therefore removed Balban in his youth from Turkistan, and separated him from his race and kindred, from his tribe and relations, and conveyed him

to this land for the purpose of curbing the Mongols." In short, Balban was kidnapped or taken prisoner as a child and brought to India, where he was purchased by Altamish. The story runs that the Sultan refused at first to buy him, because of his shortness and ugliness. "Master of the world," cried the slave, "for whose sake have you bought these other servants?" "For mine own," said Altamish, laughing. "Then buy me

A KIBITKA, OR NATIVE HUT IN TURKISTAN.

for the sake of God," begged Balban. "So be it," said the Sultan, and the ugly slave was set among the bhistis, or water-bearers. He soon showed that he was fitted for better things, rose to distinguished offices, and was enrolled in the famous corps of "the Forty" slaves.

"The hawk of fortune" was thus set upon his wrist. He served Raziya as chief huntsman, and retained his post under Bahram, being also given a fief, or grant of lands. When the Sultan was besieged in Delhi, Balban was among the leading rebels, and the success of the conspiracy brought him, in reward for his help, the government of Hansi, where he showed himself an im-

proving and benevolent ruler, at once just and generous. In 1243 he subdued rebellion and pacified the country as lord chamberlain, and when the Mongols, under Mangu Khan, pushed their way across the Indus, it was mainly due to the urgent advice and strenuous efforts of Balban, who received the title of Ulugh Khan, or Puissant lord, that the army of Delhi accomplished their defeat. It was he who compelled the Mongols to raise the siege of Uchh (1245) and retire to the hills, where he pursued them with untiring vigilance. In fact, Balban had become the guiding spirit of the Moslem rule, and when Mas'ud was deposed and his uncle Nasir-ad-din set upon the throne, the real authority was in the hands of the brilliant slave commander-in-chief.

The feebleness of the successors of Altamish had permitted a recrudescence of Hindu rebellion, and Balban's energies were devoted to constant campaigns against the "infidels." Year after year he led his troops through the Doab or to the hills of Rantambhor, against Malwa or Kalinjar, or the raja of Ijari, and everywhere his arms were victorious. His reputation became so great that the other officers and chiefs, envious of his success, prejudiced the Sultan against him and had him banished from court (1253). The leader of this intrigue was Rihan, a renegade Hindu eunuch, and the envious officers found that they had exchanged the rule of a soldier for that of a schemer. There was universal discontent at the disgrace of the favourite, and the Turkish chiefs and the Persian officials of good family resented the despotism of the eunuch and his

hired bullies. From all sides entreaties came to the banished general, beseeching him to come back. The Turkish chiefs even rose in arms, and this demonstration procured the dismissal of Rihan and the restoration of Balban to all his honours (1254). Not only were men delighted at this act of justice, but it was observed that even the Almighty manifested His pleasure by sending down the long-needed rains. "The success of Ulugh Khan shone forth with brilliant radiance; the garden of the world began to put forth leaf, and the key of divine mercy opened the doors of men's hearts."

For twenty years in all Balban served the Sultan indefatigably, and they were years full of rebellion, conspiracy, and Mongol alarms. His royal master led the life of a dervish, copied Korans to pay his modest needs, and lived in the simplest manner, attended by one wife, who cooked his dinner and was allowed no female servants. He was a kind and scholarly gentleman, who delighted in the society of the learned, but he was no king for India in the thirteenth century. Fortunately for him, he had a deputy in Balban fully able to fill his place in the anxious cares of kingship. To this conspicuously able minister were due the two great measures of the reign: the organization of the frontier provinces and tribes under his able cousin Sher Khan, by which the attacks of the Mongols were successfully repelled; and the steady suppression of Hindu disaffection in all parts of the kingdom, a perpetual and never-extinguished source of danger. The constant jealousies and revolts of the overgrown Turk-

ish chiefs demanded a strong hand to keep them down, and nothing but Balban's vigorous energy could have maintained the throne unimpaired through those twenty troubled years.

On Nasir-ad-din's death in 1266, the great minister, whose loyalty towards his gentle sovereign had never wavered, naturally stepped into his place. The same rule continued, but the mild influence of the dervish Sultan no longer softened the severity of his vizir. The energetic minister became an implacable king. With ambitious Turkish khans treading on his heels, Hindus everywhere ready to spring at the smallest opening for revolt, marauders infesting the very gates of Delhi, assaulting and robbing the bhistis and the girls who fetched water, above all with the Mongols ever hammering at the doors of the frontier posts, Balban had reason to be stern and watchful, and if he carried his severity to extreme lengths, it was probably a case of his own life against the rest. He suppressed with an iron hand the forays of the hillmen who terrified the suburbs of Delhi; his armies scoured the jungles about the capital, destroyed the villages, cleared the forest, and at a sacrifice of one hundred thousand men turned a haunt of bushrangers into a peaceable agricultural district. By building forts in disturbed parts and establishing Afghan garrisons in blockhouses, he freed the roads from the brigands who had long practically closed them. "Sixty years have passed since then," says Barani, our chief authority for this reign, "but the roads have ever since been free from robbers." Such

immunity was not attained by smooth words. Balban pounced upon a disturbed district like a hawk, burnt and slew without mercy, till "the blood of the rioters ran in streams, heaps of slain were seen near every village and jungle, and the stench of the dead spread even to the Ganges." Woodcutters were sent to cut roads through the jungles, and did more to bring order among the wild tribes than even the massacre of their fighting men.

A BHISTI, OR WATER-CARRIER.

In spite of the suffering involved, such work as this was of lasting benefit to the kingdom. So was Balban's firm treatment of the Turkish landholders, who were assuming hereditary rights, and threatened to furnish forth a barons' war. Though these men were of his own kindred, and members, or sons of members, of the famous "Forty" slaves, Balban had no mercy for them; he was with difficulty induced to mitigate the wholesale expropriation that he once contemplated, but it is clear that he did much to deprive the Turkish khans of their former power. He is said even to have poisoned his own cousin Sher Khan, because he held almost royal authority in his arduous position;

and many instances are recorded of his terrible severity toward officers whose conduct gave occasion for the exercise of stern justice.

Balban's one absorbing preoccupation was the danger of a Mongol invasion. For this cause he organized and disciplined his army to the highest point of efficiency; for this he made away with disaffected or jealous chiefs, and steadily refused to entrust authority to Hindus; for this he stayed near his capital and would not be tempted into distant campaigns. To realize the terror inspired by the Mongols one must read their description in the writings of Amir Khusru, a poet who lived at the court under the patronage of Balban's cultivated son, Prince Mohammad. His picture of the Tartar infidels, riding on camels, with their bodies of steel and faces like fire, slits of eyes sharp as gimlets, short necks, leathery wrinkled cheeks, wide hairy nostrils and huge mouths, their coarse skins covered with vermin and their horrible smell, is the caricature of fear. "They are descended from dogs, but their bones are bigger," he says. "The king marvelled at their bestial faces and said that God must have created them out of hell-fire. They looked like so many sallow devils, and the people fled from them everywhere in panic." It was no wonder that Balban kept his army ever on the alert to drive such bogies away.

The only distant expedition the Sultan made was into Bengal, where "the people had for many long years tended to rebellion, and the disaffected and evil-disposed among them generally succeeded in contam-

inating the loyalty of the governors." This opinion of Barani's concerning the Bengalis has often been reiterated in more recent times; but in the days of the early Delhi kingdom the difficulty of communication across imperfectly subdued country, and the absence of any sentiment of loyalty towards slave kings who had not yet founded a settled hereditary monarchy, may well have fostered ideas of independence in the great eastern province. Fifteen governors had successively ruled Bengal since Bakhtiyar the Khalji first carried the standard of Mohammad Ghori there in the first year of the thirteenth century; and their authority had been little curbed by the Delhi Sultans. Altamish had put an end to the Khalji chiefs' ambitions, and had placed his own son in command of Bengal, but since then the weakness of the Delhi kings had left the governors to do as they pleased.

Tughril, the fifteenth governor, a favourite slave of Balban's, observing that the Sultan was now an old man intensely preoccupied with the menace of the Mongols, and being fortified in his designs by recent successes in the wild country about Orissa, where the Bengal army had taken vast spoil, permitted "the egg of ambition to hatch" in his head, and assumed the style and insignia of sovereignty. In vivid contrast to the cold severity of Balban, the usurper of Bengal was free and open-handed, a friend with all the people. "Money closed the eyes of the clear-sighted, and greed of gold kept the cautious quiet. Soldiers and citizens forgot their fear of the sovereign power and threw themselves

heart and soul into Tughril's cause." The first army sent against him was defeated, as much perhaps by gold as by steel, and many of the Delhi troops deserted to the enemy. Their unlucky general, Aptagin of the long hair, felt the full brunt of Balban's fury and was hanged at the gate of Oudh, to the indignation of the cooler heads among the people. A second expedition met with no better fate.

Overwhelmed with shame and anger, the old Sultan himself led a third campaign. Leaving the marches over against the Mongols in the care of Prince Mohammad, and placing trusty deputies in charge of Delhi and Samana, he took his second son Bughra Khan with him, and crossing the Ganges made straight for Lakhnauti, in total disregard of the rains which were then in season. Collecting a fleet of boats, and, when none were to be had, wading through mud and water under the torrential rain of the tropics, the army pushed slowly and steadily on to the eastern capital, only to find that Tughril, not daring to face the Sultan in person, had fled with his troops and stores toward the wilds of Jajnagar. "We are playing for half my kingdom," said Balban, "and I will never return to Delhi, nor even name it, till the blood of the rebel and his followers is poured out." The soldiers knew their master's inflexible mind, and resignedly made their wills. The pursuit was vain for some time; not a trace of Tughril or his army was to be found. At last a party of scouts fell in with some corn-dealers returning from the rebel's headquarters. Chopping off a couple of heads untied

the tongues of the rest, and the enemy's camp was discovered. A patrol of some forty men cautiously went forward and viewed the tents, with the men drinking and singing and washing their clothes, the elephants

AN INDIAN BOAT.

browsing on the branches of the trees, the horses and cattle grazing. There was no time to go back for reinforcements—Tughril would be off with the dawn—and into this scene of idyllic peace the handful of troopers burst like a mountain torrent. Drawing their swords

and shouting for Tughril, they rode straight for his tent. He heard the clamour, and leaping on a bare-backed steed galloped for the river, while his followers fled madly in all directions, persuaded that Balban and all his army were upon them. Tughril was struck down by a dexterous shaft, and in an instant he was beheaded.

Then followed the punishment, conceived in Balban's comprehensive way. Gibbets were ranged along both sides of the long bazar of Lakhnauti, and on them were strung rows of rebels; the sons and kinsmen and followers of Tughril were killed and hung up to the horror of all beholders. Two days and more the work of retribution went on; even a beggar to whom the usurper had been kind was not spared, and old men told Barani half a century later "that such punishment as was inflicted on Lakhnauti had never been heard of in Delhi, nor could any one remember such a thing in all Hindustan." When it was over, the Sultan sent for his son, Bughra Khan Mahmud, and made him take an oath to recover and hold the rest of Bengal, of which he was at the same time appointed governor. Then he solemnly asked the prince, "Mahmud, dost thou see?" The son did not understand. Again he said, "Dost thou see?" and the prince was still silent and amazed. A third time the question was asked, and then the old Sultan explained: "You saw my punishments in the bazar? If ever designing and evil-minded men should incite you to waver in your allegiance to Delhi and to throw off its authority, then remember the vengeance you have seen wrought in the bazar. Understand me, and forget not,

that if the governors of Hind or Sind, Malwa or Gujarat, Lakhnauti or Sonargaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependents will fall upon them, their wives and children, and all their adherents."

After this deadly warning, he tenderly embraced his son with tears, and bade him farewell, knowing only too well that all counsels were thrown away upon a prince whose whole soul was in his pleasures. Nevertheless, Bughra Khan and five of his descendants ruled in Bengal for more than half a century (1282-1339), while in Delhi the house of Balban did not survive his death three years. In suppressing a rebellion in the remote eastern province, the Sultan had really founded his dynasty in the only part where it was free to hold its own. He did not long enjoy the memories of his terrible campaign. The death of his first-born, the popular and promising "martyr prince" Mohammad, in battle against the Mongols near Dipalpur, in 1285, broke his heart. During the day he struggled against his grief, held his court with all his wonted punctilious etiquette and splendour, and transacted the business of state; but at night he wailed and cast dust upon his head.

In 1287 Balban died, after forty years of rule, half as minister, half as king. No one understood better than he the conditions of kingship in India, or how to impress himself upon his subjects. He maintained a rich and ceremonious state among a people always

impressed by magnificence, and crowds of Hindus would come long journeys to see his pomp and majesty. Even his private attendants were never allowed to see him but in full dress. That he never laughed aloud is only to say that he was a well-bred Oriental gentleman who despised the levity of an empty mind; but neither did he permit any one else to laugh; and never joking or indulging in the least familiarity with any one, he allowed no frivolity in his presence. In his youth he had been fond of wine and hazard, but all this was put aside when he came to authority. Throughout his forty years of power he was never known to hold converse with vulgar people or to give office to any but well-born men. Slave as he once was, he came of a race of chiefs, and no one showed more sensitiveness in preserving the dignity of a king. Balban, the slave, water-carrier, huntsman, general, statesman, and Sultan is one of the most striking figures among many notable men in the long line of the kings of Delhi.

GOLD COIN OF BALBAN, STRUCK AT DELHI, A. H. 672 (A.D. 1273-4).

CHAPTER V

FIRST DECCAN CONQUESTS

ALA-AD-DIN KHALJI

1280-1311 A.D.

BALBAN was one of those men who leave no successors. His very dominance checked the growth of even imitators, much more rivals. He had extinguished the powerful group of slaves who were the true inheritors of Altamish. He had trained no school of great ministers. His hopes were centred in his eldest son, who died before him; he had no confidence in Bughra Khan, and when he found, on offering him the succession, that this frivolous prince preferred returning to his amusements in Bengal to waiting by his father's sick-bed for the splendid reversion of empire, Balban in his irritation left the throne to a son of his dead favourite, who never ascended it. A son of Bughra was set up by the chief officers, but never was a choice less fit. Kai-Kubad in his seventeen years had been so carefully brought up by tutors under his stern grandfather's eye that he had never been allowed to catch sight of a pretty girl or to sip a wine-cup. He had been taught all the polite arts and knew nothing of the im-

polite. This was the youth who suddenly found himself absolute master of all that the most luxurious city of India, all that India itself, could offer to youth and desire. The result may be left to the imagination. In less than three years he had drunk and debauched himself into a paralytic; and when a ruffian was sent to murder him, he found him in the chamber of mirrors in his lovely palace at Kilughari on the Jumna, lying

THE RIVER JUMNA AT MATHURA.

at his last gasp, and then and there literally kicked him out of this world.

His father had come from Bengal to try and save him, though he himself was not of a didactic nature; but he found him amiable and hopeless, utterly under the spell of a clever vizir, Nizam-ad-din, who encouraged the fool in his folly in the hope of succeeding to the throne. But Nizam-ad-din overreached himself. The crippling of the kingdom was more serious than the

paralysis of the Sultan. The officers who remembered the stern order of Balban's rule found even greater severity, but none of the order, under the arrogant vizir. A series of murders, beginning with Balban's heir-designate, the son of the "martyr prince," followed by an insidious inquisition from which no man was safe, roused an opposition which developed into a war of races.

Besides the Turks who had held most of the offices of state since the days of Aybek, there were a large number of adventurers of other races in the service of the Slave Kings. Many of these were Afghans, or Turks so mixed and associated with Afghans that they had absorbed their character and customs. These were known as Patans or Pathans, a term loosely used, much as Moghul was in later times, to describe the white men from the northwest mountains. The clan of Khaljis, named after the Afghan village of Khalj, though probably of Turkish origin, had become Afghan in character, and between them and the Turks no love was lost. Khaljis had conquered Bengal and ruled there, and Khaljis held many posts in other parts. These formed a strong party, and rallied round Jalal-ad-din, the muster-master or adjutant-general, an old Khalji who had been marked for destruction by the Turkish adherents of the vizir. The Khaljis were not popular, but the vizir was hated; the choice of evils, however, did not lie with the people, and on the death of the paralytic Sultan the reaction against the Turks brought the Khaljis into power, and set Jalal-ad-din upon the throne

of Delhi. For a time at least the Turks had lost the empire.

It is characteristic of the adaptability of the Indian people that although the Turks were foreigners and their rule had been anything but conciliatory, their suppression was resented as a wanton innovation. No Khalji, they said, had ever been a king, and the race had no part or lot in Delhi. Conservative in everything, the Hindu cherishes even his oppressors. Nevertheless, the Khalji dynasty lasted thirty years and included six sovereigns, and among them was one great ruler, whose reign of twenty years contributed powerfully to the extension of the Moslem dominion in India. Jalal-ad-din Firoz Shah himself was the mildest king that ever held a sceptre. An old man of seventy years, preoccupied with preparations for the next world, he utterly refused to shed blood, even for flagrant crimes. When Chhaju, a nephew of Balban, led an army against the Sultan and the rebels were defeated and captured, Firoz forgave them freely, and kindly commended their loyalty to the fallen house. A thousand Thugs were arrested, but Firoz would not consent to the execution even of the members of a society of assassins, and merely banished them to Bengal. Traitors, conspirators, and thieves alike found mercy and forgiveness at the hands of the long-suffering king, who had never stained his soul with blood save in open battle, when, as against the Mongols on the Indus in 1292, he had shown himself valiant indeed. The execution of a fakir suspected of magic and sedition was his only act of capital punish-

ment, but the exception was unfortunate; for superstitious folk saw in the black storm that darkened the world on the day of the holy man's death under the elephant's foot, and in the famine that ensued, omens of the fall of the crown.

The invincible clemency and humility of the Sultan were incomprehensible and exasperating to his followers. His was no ideal of kingship for an Eastern world. They resented his simplicity of life and even his familiar evenings with the old friends of his former obscurity. They did not appreciate his love of wit and learning. What they wanted was a fighting king, inexorable in his judgments and unsurpassable in his pomp. Sedition grew apace, and the Sultan's nephew, Ala-ad-din, who had married his uncle's daughter, put himself at the head of the malcontents. After a course of dissimulation—it was easy to deceive the kind-hearted unsuspecting old man—the nephew drew the Sultan unarmed and unguarded into a trap (1296), and as Firoz was stooping and actually fondling the traitor, Ala-ad-din gave the signal, and one of the basest murders in history was accomplished. The aged king was slashed, thrown down, and beheaded, and his white hairs cast at the feet of the nephew he had trusted.

"Although Ala-ad-din," writes Barani in just horror, "reigned successfully for some years, and all things prospered to his wish, and though he had wives and children, family and adherents, wealth and grandeur, still he did not escape retribution for the blood of his patron. He shed more innocent blood than ever Pha-

raoh was guilty of. Fate at length placed a betrayer in his path, by whom his family was destroyed, and the retribution that fell upon it never had a parallel in any infidel land." Nevertheless, for twenty years Ala-ad-din ruled Hindustan with unprecedented vigour, and broadened the borders of his kingdom. He had already a reputation as a soldier, and found no opposition worth mentioning to his accession. The widow of Firoz, a woman who is described as "the silliest of the silly," did indeed set up one of the late monarch's sons as king at Delhi; but Ibrahim was a mere stripling, and a much more capable brother, Arkali Khan, was far away in Multan. The whole family were secured under promise of safety, and once caught were blinded and imprisoned. The mouths of the people were closed with gold. As Ala-ad-din marched to Delhi, a catapult showered pounds of "gold stars" among the crowd at every halt. Recruits flocked to such a Pactolian stream, and before he reached the capital he had a following of fifty-six thousand horse and sixty thousand foot. The officers and nobles of the late king, to their credit be it said, wavered before they threw in their lot with his assassin; but gold and numbers told in the end.

GOLD COIN OF ALA-AD-DIN, STRUCK AT DELHI, A.H. 698 (A.D. 1298-9).

In November, 1296, Ala-ad-din entered Delhi unopposed, seated himself with all pomp upon the throne,

and took up his residence in the Red Palace. His politic conciliation of the late king's officers was abandoned as soon as the royal family were safely caged; but the new Sultan's wrath, curiously enough, fell upon those of the officials and nobles who had deserted Firoz and taken his murderer's money. All of them were arrested and locked up. "Some were blinded and some were killed. The wealth which they had received from Ala-ad-din, and their property, goods, and effects were all seized. Their houses were confiscated to the Sultan, and their villages were brought into the public exchequer. Nothing was left to their children; their retainers and followers were taken in charge by the amirs who supported the new régime, and their establishments were overthrown." The only three of the officers of Firoz who were spared were three who had never abandoned him nor taken gold from his supplanter. "They alone remained safe, but all the other Jalali nobles were cut up root and branch." It was a lesson for turncoats.

We have other details of the same kind preserved in the writings of Ziyad-ad-din Barani, the historian of the period. Barani's father and uncle were both in Ala-ad-din's employ, the one as deputy at Baran, the other at Karra and Oudh. The historian therefore had ample means of information regarding the Sultan and his manner of government, even if the statements be not always wholly trustworthy.

Sultan Ala-ad-din, who entered upon his reign with these trenchant measures, was first and foremost a sol-

dier. So illiterate was he that he did not even know how to read. But he knew how to command an army and to carry it through an arduous campaign. Shortly before the murder of his uncle he had won great glory by his conquests in the Deccan. Hitherto the utmost

THE NARBADA RIVER AT JABALPUR.

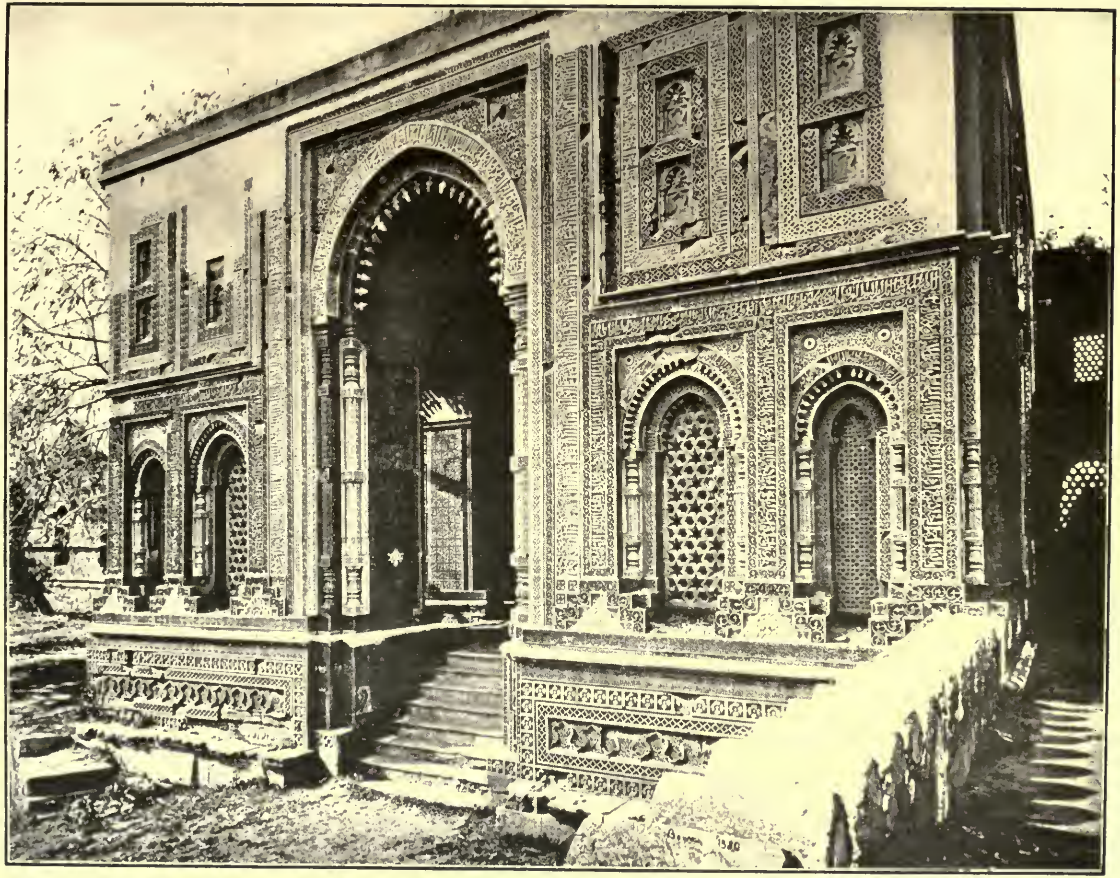
stretch of the kingdom of Delhi had been across the plains from the Indus to Bengal, and from the Himalayas to the Vindhya Mountains. No Mohammedan ruler had ventured to cross the Narbada River and the Satpura hills into the great plateau of Southern India, Maharashtra, the land of the Marathas. In 1294, however, after successfully dealing with insurrections in

Bandelkhand and Malwa, Prince Ala-ad-din set out with eight thousand men from his government of Karra on the Jumna, bent upon more ambitious schemes. Forcing his way through the forests of the Vindhya range, by difficult passes, and ill-provided with men or supplies, the prince carried his small force seven hundred miles to Devagiri, the capital of the Maratha raja, which he took and pillaged unresisted. He had given out that he had quarrelled with his uncle, the Sultan of Delhi, and was seeking service with one of the southern rajas. The ruler of Devagiri was taken by surprise and fled to one of the hill forts. Here, by another lie, Ala-ad-din procured his submission and the cession of Elichpur, and thus the Moslems made their first step into the Deccan. It was from the boundless treasures won in this campaign that the conqueror procured the "golden stars" which lighted his road to Delhi.

The way to the south, thus opened, was never closed again, though in the earliest years of his reign Ala-ad-din had other work to do. After the suppression of the nobles came the invasions of those human locusts, the Mongols, who from 1296 to 1305 made repeated incursions over the Indus. The worst of these was in 1297, when Kutlugh Khwaja, starting from the Oxus and coming down the passes, marched upon Delhi, driving before him such a crowd of fugitives that the streets were blocked and a state of famine prevailed. The capital was in no condition for defence; but when urged to temporize with the enemy, the Sultan indignantly refused. "If I were to follow your advice," he said,

"how could I show my face, how go into my harem, what store would the people set by me, and where would be the daring and courage needed to keep down my own turbulent subjects? No: come what may, to-morrow I march into the plain of Kili." There, at a short distance from Delhi, he found two hundred thousand Mongols drawn up. The Sultan's right wing under his gallant general Zafar Khan, who had lately taken Siwistan from the Mongols by a brilliant *coup de main* broke the enemy's left and pursued them off the field for many miles, mowing them down at every stride. But the left, under Ulugh Khan, the Sultan's brother, jealously refused to support him, and Zafar was cut off by an ambush. Despising the Mongol leader's offer of quarter, he shot his last arrows, killing an enemy at every twang of the bow, and was then surrounded and slain. Though the right wing of the Delhi army was thus rashly but gallantly lost, its valour was not thrown away. The Mongols had seen enough of the Indian horsemen, and in the night they vanished.

The Mongol inroads and the long establishment of these nomads on the frontier led to the settlement of many of the strangers in India, and their quarters at Delhi became known as Mughalpur, or Mongol-town. They adopted Islam and were called "the new Moslems." Their fate was miserable. They were kept in great poverty, and eventually became a danger to the state. A conspiracy among them was discovered, and Ala-ad-din commanded that the whole of the "new Moslems" should be destroyed in one day. The order



The Gateway of Ala-ad-Din in the Mosque at Delhi.
From a Photograph.

was carried out. Thirty to forty thousand wretched Mongols were killed in cold blood, their houses plundered, their wives and children cast adrift on the world. Cruelty toward women and children was a new experience in India. "Up to this time," says Barani, "no hand had ever been laid upon wives or children on account of men's misdeeds." To cast them into prison in revenge for their husbands' and fathers' rebellion was one of the unenviable inventions which made "the crafty cruelty" of Ala-ad-din detested.

There was undoubtedly a great deal of popular ferment, which may well have taxed the never easy temper of the Sultan and provoked severe retaliation. We read of a dangerous mutiny of the troops in 1298, after a successful campaign in Gujarat, where the Hindus had again become independent. Their raja was driven away into the Deccan, and the idol which had been set up at Somnath, in the place of the linga destroyed by Mahmud of Ghazni, was cast down and carried to Delhi to be trodden under the feet of the faithful. An attempt to wrest from the army the legal fifth of the immense booty seized in this campaign led to the mutiny; some of the chief officers were killed, including a nephew of the Sultan, and the soldiers were allowed perforce to keep their spoil.

In spite of such checks, the wealth and prosperity of the Sultan were unbounded. To quote the words of the contemporary Barani: "In the third year of his reign Ala-ad-din had little to do beyond attending to his pleasures, giving feasts, and holding festivals.

One success followed another; despatches of victory came in from all sides; every year he had two or three sons born; affairs of state went on to his satisfaction, his treasury was overflowing, boxes and caskets of jewels and pearls were daily displayed before his eyes, he had numerous elephants in his stables and seventy thousand horses in the city and environs. . . . All this prosperity intoxicated him. Vast desires and great aims, far beyond him or a hundred thousand of his like, germinated in his brain, and he indulged fancies which had never occurred to any king before him. In his conceit, ignorance, and folly, he completely lost his balance, formed utterly impossible schemes, and cherished the wildest desires. He was a man of no learning and never associated with men of learning. He could not read or write a letter. He was bad-tempered, obstinate, and hard-hearted; but the world smiled upon him, fortune befriended him, and his plans were usually successful, so that he only became the more reckless and arrogant." He dreamed of emulating the Prophet Mohammed himself, and of founding a new religion, and he contemplated setting up a viceroy in Delhi, and then, he would say in his cups at one of his frequent carousals, "I will go forth, like Alexander, in search of conquest, and subdue the world." He caused his title to be proclaimed in the Friday prayers and engraved on coins and inscriptions as "the second Alexander."

There were wiser men than Ala-ad-din, however, at the royal revels, and one of them, an uncle of the historian whom we have quoted, ventured to give the Sul-

tan good advice. He counselled him to leave religion-making to the prophets, and instead of dreaming of universal conquest to set about reducing the many cities and districts of Hindustan, such as Rantambhor, Chitor, Chanderi, Malwa, Dhar, and Ujjain, which were still in Hindu hands; to "close the road to Multan" against the Mongols; and to give up wine and junketing. Instead of resenting this frank advice, the Sultan promised to adopt it, and handsomely rewarded the honest counsellor. The very first step toward mastering the still unsubdued parts of Hindustan showed Ala-ad-din that he had been living in a fool's paradise. Instead of conquering the world like Alexander, he found that the mere siege of Rantambhor taxed all his energies; and while it was dragging on for many months, other events happened which caused reflection. He was very nearly assassinated in a conspiracy headed by a nephew, who, leaving the Sultan for dead, sat himself upon the throne, received the homage of the nobles, and was even about to enter his uncle's harem, when the eunuch Malik Dinar faced him at the door and swore he should not go in until he produced Ala-ad-din's head. The head all too soon appeared, but set alertly as ever on its own shoulders, as the living Sultan showed himself to the army on a neighbouring knoll. The rebel Akat Khan was beheaded instead of his uncle; the conspirators were scourged to death with wire thongs, and their wives and children were sent into captivity.

Nor was this the only sign of the times. Two other nephews raised the flag of insurrection, and though

overpowered and cruelly blinded in their uncle's presence, their failure did not discourage imitation. A mad revolt broke out at Delhi, led by a slave, who set up an unfortunate grandson of Altamish as Sultan, opened the

A STREET IN THE OLD CAPITAL UJJAIN.

prison doors, and rioted unchecked for days. Though the revolt was more like a mummery of the Abbot of Unreason than a political movement, and was suppressed with little difficulty, it showed the uneasiness and ferment of the people. Four mutinies or insurrec-

tions in a few months pointed to something amiss, and the Sultan determined to find out the causes of the discontent. After many consultations day and night with his chief counsellors, it was resolved that the main reasons were to be found in the Sultan's disregard of the doings of the people; in the prevalence of convivial meetings where open political talk followed the wine-cup; in the seditious intimacy of the various amirs and notables; and in the fact that too many people had a superfluity of wealth with which they could suborn adventurers and set revolts on foot.

Whether these results were really the opinions of the council or merely the *ex post facto* deductions of the historian who records them, they were at least acted upon by the king. The evil effects of too much wealth among his subjects particularly impressed him: it was a disease admitting of easy and gratifying cure. "The Sultan," says Barani, "ordered that wherever there was a village held by proprietary right, in free gift, or as a religious endowment, it should by one stroke of the pen be brought under the exchequer. The people were pressed and amerced, and money was exacted from them on every kind of pretext. Many were left without any money, till at length it came to pass that, excepting maliks and amirs, officials, the large traders from Multan, and the bankers, no one possessed even a trifle in cash. So rigorous was the confiscation that, beyond a few thousand tankas (a coin about equivalent in value to the modern rupee), all the pensions, grants in land, and endowments in the country were appro-

priated. The people were all so absorbed in obtaining the means of living that the very name of rebellion was never mentioned."

In the next place he organized a universal system of espionage. "No one could stir without his knowledge, and whatever happened in the houses of nobles, great men, and officials was communicated to the Sultan by his reporter." Nor were the reports shelved; they led to unpleasant investigations. "The system of reporting went to such a length that nobles dared not speak aloud even in 'palaces of a thousand columns,' and if they had anything to say they communicated by signs. In their own houses, night and day, the reports of the spies made them tremble. No word or action that could provoke censure or punishment was allowed to escape. The transactions in the bazars, the buying and selling, and the bargains made, were all reported to the Sultan and were kept under control."

Nor was this all. Remembering the warning of his counsellors on the political influences of social revels, "he prohibited wine-drinking and wine-selling as well as the use of beer and intoxicating drugs. Dicing was also forbidden. Many prohibitions of wine and beer were issued. Vintners and gamblers and beer-sellers were turned out of the city and the heavy taxes which had been levied upon them were abolished and lost to the treasury. The Sultan directed that all the china and glass vessels of his banqueting-room should be broken, and the fragments of them were thrown before the Badaun gate, where they rose in a heap. Jars and

casks of wine were brought out of the royal cellars and emptied at the same gate in such abundance that mud and mire was produced as at the rain season." The Sultan himself renounced all wine-drinking, and many of the better sort followed his example, but of course there was a great deal of clandestine bibbing among the dissolute, and these when detected were thrown into pits dug outside the Badaun gate, where many perished miserably. It was found impossible wholly to suppress the use of wine, and the Sultan was obliged to wink at a certain amount of drinking, provided that it was private and the liquor brewed at home; but public drinking was for the time stamped out.

Still further to discourage conspiracy and privy understandings, the Sultan gave commands that "noblemen and grandees should not visit at each other's houses, or give feasts, or hold meetings. They were forbidden to form alliances without consent from the throne, and they were also prohibited from allowing people to resort to their houses. To such a length was this last prohibition carried that strangers could not gain admittance into a nobleman's house. Feasting and hospitality fell into total disuse. Through fear of the spies the nobles kept themselves quiet; they gave no parties and had little communication with each other. No man of a seditious, rebellious, or evil reputation was allowed to come near them. If they went to the palaces, they could not lay their heads together and sit down cosily and tell each other their troubles."

Besides this system of espionage among the Moslems,

great and small, the Sultan devised special measures against his Hindu subjects. The Hindu was to be so reduced as to be left unable to keep a horse to ride on, to carry arms, to wear fine clothes, or to enjoy any of the luxuries of life. He was taxed to the extent of half the produce of his land, and had to pay duties on all his buffaloes, goats, and other milch-cattle. The taxes were to be levied equally on rich and poor, at so much per acre, so much per animal. Any collectors or officers taking bribes were summarily dismissed and heavily punished "with sticks, pincers, the rack, imprisonment, and chains." The new rules were strictly carried out, so that one revenue officer would string together twenty Hindu notables and enforce payment by blows. No gold or silver, not even the betel nut, so cheering and stimulative to pleasure, was to be seen in a Hindu house, and the wives of the impoverished native officials were reduced to taking service in Moslem families. Revenue officers came to be regarded as more deadly than the plague; and to be a government clerk was a disgrace worse than death, insomuch that no Hindu would marry his daughter to such a man—a state of affairs that showed their feeling against the power that ruled them.

AN INDIAN COURT.

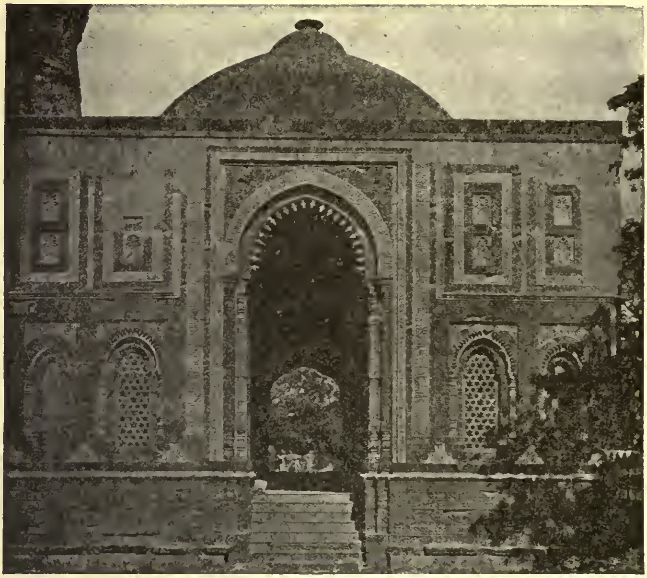
All these new enactments were promulgated without any reference to the legal authorities. Ala-ad-din

held that government was one thing and law another, and so long as what he ordered seemed to him good he did not stop to inquire whether it was according to law. One day, however, he saw the learned kadi of Biana at court, and addressing him said he had some questions to ask to which he required truthful replies. "The angel of my fate seems to be at hand," cried the kadi in alarm, "since your Majesty wishes to question me on matters of religious law." The Sultan promised not to kill him, and a curious conversation ensued.

Ala-ad-din wished first to know the legal position of Hindus, and the kadi replied: "They are called payers of tribute, and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should, without question and with all humility and respect, tender gold. If the officer throws dirt (or spits) into their mouths, they must unreluctantly open their mouths wide to receive it. By doing so they show their respect for the officer. The due submission of the non-Moslems is exhibited in this humble payment and by this throwing of dirt into their mouths. The glorification of Islam is a duty, and contempt of the Religion is vain. God holds them in contempt, for He says 'keep them under in subjection.' To keep the Hindus in abasement is especially a religious duty, because they are the most inveterate enemies of the Prophet."

The Sultan said that he did not understand a word of the learned man's argument, but he had taken his measures to reduce the pride of the Hindus, and had succeeded in making them so obedient that "at my

command they are ready to creep into holes like mice." "O Doctor," he went on, "thou art a learned man, but hast no experience of the world. I am an unlettered man, but I have seen a great deal. Be assured then that the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty. I have therefore given



THE GATEWAY OF ALA-AD-DIN IN THE MOSQUE AT DELHI.

orders that just sufficient shall be left to them from year to year of corn, milk, and curds, but that they shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards of property."

So far the law and the Sultan were not at variance. When they spoke of the punishment of corrupt revenue officers, there was still not much difference; but when the Sultan touched upon the delicate question of his own claim upon war-booty and upon the public treas-

ury, the kadi said, "The time of my death is at hand. If I answer your question honestly you will slay me, and if I give an untrue reply I shall hereafter go to hell." Nevertheless he spoke out boldly and told Ala-ad-din that all treasure won by the armies of Islam belonged to the public treasury and not to the Sultan, and that if he wished to follow the highest example of the most enlightened caliphs he would draw no more from the treasury for himself and his family and establishment than was allotted to each fighting man in the army. This reply excited the Sultan's wrath and he said, "Dost thou not fear my sword, when thou tellest me that all my great expenditure on my harem is unlawful?" The kadi replied, "I do fear your Majesty's sword, and I look upon this turban as my winding-sheet; but your Majesty questions me about the law, and I answer to the best of my ability. If, however, you ask my advice from a political point of view, then I say that whatever your Majesty spends upon your harem no doubt tends to raise your dignity in the eyes of men; and the exaltation of a king's dignity is essential to good policy."

After many questions and answers, the Sultan said to the kadi, "You have declared my proceedings in these matters to be unlawful. Now see how I act. When troopers do not appear at the muster, I order three years' pay to be taken from them. I place wine-drinkers and wine-sellers in the pits. If a man debauches another man's wife, I effectually prevent him from again committing such an offence, and the woman

I cause to be killed. Rebels, good and bad, old hands or novices, I slay; their wives and children I reduce to beggary and ruin. Extortion I punish with the torture of the pincers and the stick, and I keep the extortioner in prison, in chains and fetters, until every halfpenny is restored. Political prisoners I confine and chastise. Wilt thou say all this is unlawful?"

Then the kadi rose and went to the entrance of the room, placed his forehead on the ground, and cried with a loud voice: "My liege, send your unworthy servant to prison, or order him to be cut in two, but *all* this is unlawful and finds no support in the sayings of the Prophet or in the expositions of the learned." The Sultan said nothing, but put on his slippers and went into his harem. The kadi went home, took a last farewell of his family, and performed the ablutions required of one about to die. Then he bravely returned to court; when to his amazement the Sultan gave him his own robe and a thousand tankas, with these words, "Although I have not studied the Science or the Book (the Koran), I am a Moslem of a Moslem stock. To prevent rebellion, in which thousands perish, I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the state and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, contumacious, and disobedient to my commands. I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience. I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful: whatever I think to be for the good of the state or opportune for the emergency, that I decree."

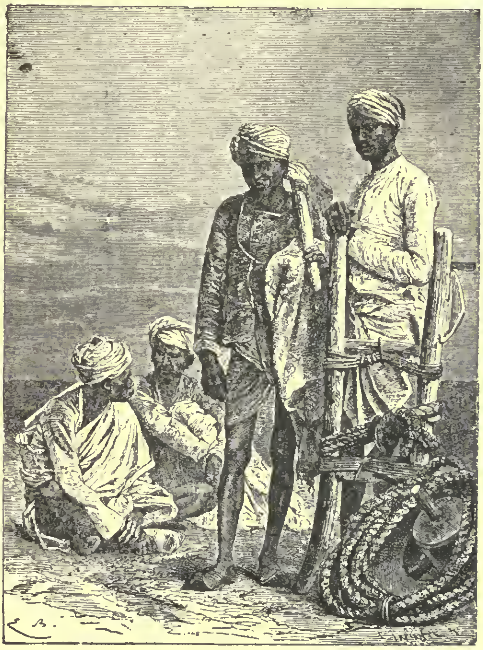
We have given most of Barani's account of this

interview and of Ala-ad-din's methods of administration because they present a valuable picture of Moslem rule in India, and such intimate views are rare in Eastern chronicles. The historian may perhaps have described what he himself thought rather than what the Sultan or the kadi really said; but as his relatives were officials in Ala-ad-din's service, he had good means of knowing the truth. The Sultan did not stop at repressive measures: he interfered with trade, and even meddled with the laws of supply and demand. The occasion for these innovations was presented by an external danger. Another invasion of the Mongols in 1303, when they again threatened Delhi, camped on the Jumna, blocked the roads, and occupied the suburbs for two months, alarmed the Sultan. The Mongols retired without taking the capital, but not on account of any success of the Indian army. Never in fact had Delhi been less protected. The Sultan had just returned from taking the Rajput stronghold of Chitor, the siege of which in the rainy season had almost prostrated his troops. A second army sent to the Deccan to conquer Warangal in the same unfavourable season had suffered even more severely, and had returned diminished and discouraged. There was no force at his command capable of meeting the Mongols in the field, and their departure without conquering the capital was regarded as nothing less than a miracle.

This narrow escape concentrated Ala-ad-din's care upon his defences. Abandoning for the time all thought of further conquest, he settled himself at his

new palace-fortress of Siri, and set to work at preparations for repelling attack. He repaired and added to the forts of Delhi, constructed siege-engines, stone-slings, and mangonels, and collected arms and stores. Strong garrisons were placed at Samana and Dipalpur, which had become the Moslem outposts on the threatened northwest frontier (for the Mongols still practically held the Panjab), and tried generals were set in command of all the posts on the Mongol track. The main difficulty was how to increase the army and maintain it in efficient order, well-mounted, well-armed, well-trained, and well supplied with archers. The pay of the soldier was fixed at 234 *tankas* (nearly £24), with an addition of 78 tankas (£8) for those who contributed two horses. In order to enable the soldier to live on this pay, support his family, and furnish himself with horses and arms, the Sultan ventured upon experiments in political economy. He resolved to keep down the cost of necessaries, and enacted that thenceforth there should be a fixed price for food. The principal items were thus fixed in the new tariff: Wheat, 7½ *jitals* (nearly 3d) per *man* (about a quarter, 28 lbs.); barley, 1½d; rice, 2d; pulse, 2d; lentils, 1d. This scale of prices was maintained as long as Ala-ad-din lived. As a matter of fact it may be taken to represent the average open market price in country towns, and the Sultan's measures were evidently intended to counteract the tendency to inflated prices at the metropolis caused by an inadequate supply of provisions.

To increase this supply and encourage larger importation he gave orders that the crown villages of the Doab and some other parts should pay their taxes in kind, and with these contributions he accumulated vast stores of grain in Delhi, from which in times of scarcity corn was sold at the tariff price to the inhabitants. The carriers of the kingdom were registered and encouraged to bring corn from the villages at the fixed price. Any attempts at regrating or holding up corn and selling it at enhanced prices were sternly put down. Inspectors watched the markets, and if the prices rose by so much as a farthing, the overseer received twenty stripes with a stick; the offence seldom recurred. Short weight was checked by the effectual method of carving from the hams of the unjust dealer a piece of flesh equivalent to the deficit in the weight of what he had sold. Everything was set down in the tariff: vegetables, fruits, sugar, oil, horses, slaves, caps,



DOAB VILLAGERS.

shoes, combs, and needles; and we learn that a serving girl cost 5 to 12 tankas, a concubine 20 to 40, slave labourers 10 to 15, handsome pages 20 to 30, and so forth.

These various measures show that the Sultan, though he might be wrong-headed and disdainful of the law, was a man of sense and determination, who knew his own mind, saw the necessities of the situation, met them by his own methods, and carried out those methods with persistence. They were undoubtedly successful. We hear of no more rebellions, and when next the Mongols tried issues with the Sultan's new army they were effectually defeated. "The armies of Islam were everywhere triumphant over them. Many thousands were taken prisoners, and were brought with ropes round their necks to Delhi, where they were cast under the feet of elephants. Their heads were piled up into pyramids or built into towers." It is related in sober fact that the blood and bones of the Mongols formed part of the building materials of the new walls and gates and defences with which the Sultan improved the capital. On one of the occasions of a Mongol inroad not a man went back alive, and the enemy "conceived such a fear and dread of the army of Islam that all fancy for coming to Hindustan was washed out of their breasts. All fear of the Mongols entirely departed from Delhi and the neighbouring provinces. Perfect security was everywhere felt, and the peasants carried on their agriculture in peace." This was largely due to the suc-

cessful frontier fighting of Ghazi Malik, afterwards Sultan Taghlak, the governor of the Panjab, a worthy successor of Sher Khan.

Freed by these reforms from the fear of conspiracy and invasion, Sultan Ala-ad-din resumed his plans of conquest. He had reduced two great Hindu fortresses, Rantambhor and Chitor, though at enormous cost. He now turned again towards the Deccan. An army under Malik Kafur Hazardinari (the "five-hundred-guinea man"), a handsome castrato who had fascinated the Sultan, was sent in 1308 to recover Devagiri, where the Yadava ruler Rama Deva had reasserted his independence and neglected to pay the tribute he promised at the time of Ala-ad-din's conquest fifteen years before. The campaign was successful. Kafur, assisted by the muster-master Khwaja Hajji, laid the country waste, took much booty, and brought the rebel Hindu and his sons to Delhi. The Sultan treated the captive raja with all honour, gave him a royal canopy and the style of "King of Kings," and presenting him with a lac of tankas (£10,000) sent him back to govern Devagiri as his vassal.

In the following year Kafur and Hajji were despatched on a more ambitious errand: they were ordered to take the fort of Warangal, in Telingana, towards the eastern Ghats, the capital of the Kakatiya rajas. On the march through his territories Rama Deva displayed the dutiful behaviour of a vassal, assisted the army in every way, and contributed a contingent of Marathas, thus justifying the Sultan's

confidence. The mud fort of Warangal was taken by assault, the stone fort was invested, and the raja surrendered his treasures and agreed to pay tribute. Kafur returned to Delhi with a booty of a hundred elephants, 7,000 horses, and quantities of jewels. In 1310 the same generals pushed their way to the Malabar coast, took the old capital of Dvara-samudra, almost as far south as Mysore, destroyed the great temple of the golden idols in Ma'bar (probably Malabar), bringing home in the early part of 1311 no less than 612 elephants, 20,000 horses, coffers of precious stones and pearls, and 96,000 *mans* of gold, which, taking the *man* at no more than ¼ cwt., amounts to 1200 tons of gold. Considering the vast wealth of the Hindu shrines, which had never before been despoiled in the Deccan, the sum, though doubtless exaggerated, is not absolutely incredible. The treasure was brought to the palace of Siri, and the Sultan thereupon presented the officers of the fortunate campaign with gifts of gold measured out by the hundredweight. The rajas of Devagiri and Warangal paid their tribute, and the northern part of the Deccan acknowledged the suzerainty of Delhi.

This was the climax of Ala-ad-din's reign. He had done much. The Mongols were no longer the terror of the Panjab. The army was never stronger, as its victories in the Deccan proved, and never cheaper, owing to the regulated price of provisions. Rebellion had ceased to raise its head, and the severity of its repression had procured a security to the agricul-

turist and safety of the roads such as had never been known before. The control of the markets not only ensured cheap food at the capital, but also honest dealing, according to Barani, although the eulogy is probably relative. Temperance had been forced upon the people, and, with the example of the sober court, men of great learning and piety abounded. Such results testify to the greatness of a remarkable king.

A DECCAN TYPE.

The inevitable and swift reaction came from the Sultan's own faults, exaggerated by an increasing disease. His violent temper led him to displace experienced governors; his infatuation for Kafur bred envy and disunion, and caused the death or imprisonment of trusted counsellors. His sons, prematurely emancipated from the schoolroom, took to drink and debauchery. The disputes of the nobles and the riotous behaviour of the heir encouraged revolts on all sides. In the midst of the confusion Ala-ad-din died (January, 1316) of dropsy. Though he was a bloody and unscrupulous tyrant and went to extremes of cruelty in carrying out

his measures, none may refuse him the title of a strong and capable ruler.

The death of the strong man was followed by the results too common in Eastern history. There was no one fit to stand in his place. The favourite Kafur seized upon the government, and set up Shihab-ad-din Omar, a child of six years, on his father's throne. Two elder sons of the late king were deprived of sight with atrocious cruelty. The chief queen was robbed and turned out of the palace. The miscreant was even plotting a general massacre of the great nobles, when one night some foot-soldiers fortunately contrived to murder him in his bedroom. His regency had lasted scarcely more than five weeks. Another son of Ala-ad-din, after acting for a few months as governor over his infant brother, sent him away blinded, and took the throne himself in April, 1316, with the title of Kutb-ad-din Mubarak Shah.

No more violent contrast to the stern and capable father could be imagined. Mubarak was an easy-going, good-tempered youth of seventeen, the slave of his own pleasures, and everything reverted to the old lax way. The genial new king opened the jails and let seventeen thousand prisoners loose, presented the army with six months' pay, and distributed his grants and largesses promiscuously. All the new taxes and penalties were abolished, and all dread of the Sultan and of the revenue officer's scourge vanished. "Men were no longer in doubt and fear of hearing 'Do this, but don't do that; say this, but don't say

that; hide this, but don't hide that; eat this, but don't eat that; sell such as this, but don't sell things like that; act like this, but don't act like that.'" Every-one took his ease and indulged his tastes like his sovereign. The wine-shops were reopened and all the world drank. Prices went up, the new tariff was forgotten, and the bazar people, rejoicing at the death of their persecutor, cheated and fleeced as they listed. Labourers' wages rose twenty-five per cent.; bribery, extortion, and peculation flourished. The Hindus, relieved of the recent exactions, were "beside themselves with joy. They who had plucked the green ears of corn because they could not get bread, who had not a decent garment, and had been so harassed and beaten that they had not even time to scratch their heads, now put on fine apparel, rode on horseback, and shot their arrows." In short, every one did as he pleased and enjoyed himself to the full, and India was her old happy-go-lucky self again.

The Sultan set his subjects a bad example. Utterly careless and unspeakably depraved, he threw himself heart and soul into all the wretchedness of unclean living. Openly by night and by day he displayed his contempt for decency. So eager was the demand at court for mistresses that the price of a pretty girl, who could be bought in the late reign for a couple of pounds, ran up to as much as £200. Like his father, the young Sultan had a vile favourite, a Hindu Parvani, a pariah of the lowest caste from Gujarat, whom he styled Khusru Khan, and under his corrupt influ-

ence Mubarak became more shameless than ever: his very speech became foul and obscene, he tricked himself in woman's clothes, and let his majordomo

INDIAN DANCING GIRLS.

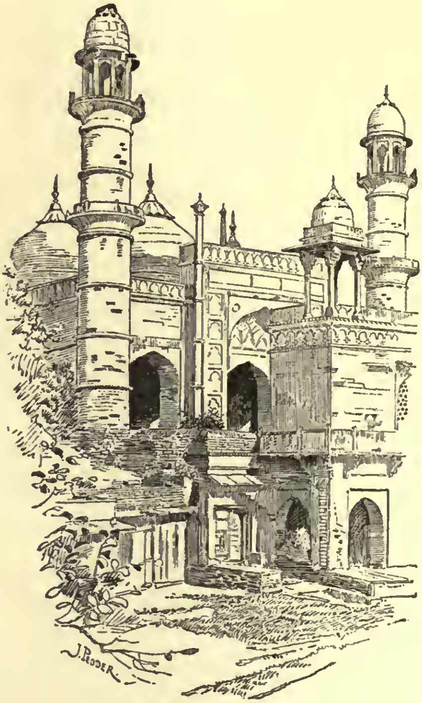
indulge his horse-play upon the nobles in full court stark naked. No more was the Sultan seen at the public prayers in the mosque of his forefathers, and the fast of Ramazan was openly violated.

With this wholesale abandonment of religion and

morals, the reckless youth's temper began to show the ferocity of his vindictive father. When Haripala Deva, the son of the late Rama Deva, rebelled at Devagiri, Mubarak had him flayed alive. When the king's cousin Asad-ad-din, indignant at the way things were going, formed a conspiracy and was betrayed, not only were the plotters beheaded in front of the royal tent, but twenty-nine young brothers of the leader, children wholly innocent of the plot, were slaughtered like sheep, and the women of the family were turned out homeless into the streets. His own brothers did not escape his fury. Three of them, including the ex-child-king, were in the fort of Gwalior, blinded and helpless. All three were murdered. The governor of Gujarat was executed for no fault; the new Hindu raja of Devagiri, Yaklakhi, revolted, and had his nose and ears cut off; by the intrigues of the Hindu pariah the old and tried nobles of the late Sultan were disgraced, banished, blinded, imprisoned, and scourged. Finally, one night in March, 1321, the favourite murdered his master, and the headless trunk of Mubarak Shah was seen by the light of torches falling from one of the palace windows. He amply deserved his fate.

Then began a hideous reign of terror. Khusru mounted the throne as Sultan Nasir-ad-din, "the Helper of the Faith," and there followed an orgy of blood and violence such as had never before been heard of in India. The harem of the Sultan was brutally ravished; every one worth killing was slain in the palace; three days after the murder of his sovereign Khusru took to

wife the queen of his victim, a Hindu princess to whom such an alliance was an unspeakable profanation; the wives and daughters of the royal family and of the great nobles were delivered over to the scum of Khusru's pariahs; "the flames of bloodshed and brutality reddened the sky." The holy Koran was desecrated; idols were set up in the mosques. The reign of an unclean pariah was as revolting to the Hindus themselves as to the Moslems. Had a Rajput attempted to rally the still powerful forces of his countrymen and to make a bid for the throne, the chaos of the times might have given him a chance of success. The stubborn defence of Rantambhor and Chitor showed that the Hindu chiefs were far from subdued. But no Indian of any race or creed, save the outcast sweepers of his own degraded and despised class, would follow a Parvani.

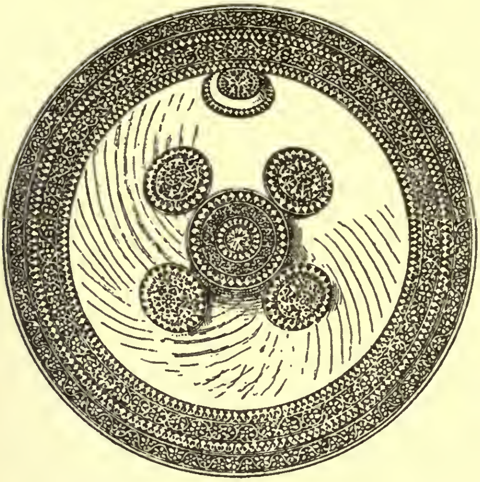


SCENE IN GWALIOR.

The hope of the Moslems lay in one man, the only man of whom the Hindu upstart went in abject fear.

This was Taghlak, the warden of the marches, who had held the frontier against the Mongols since the great days of Ala-ad-din's victories, and had routed them in a score of battles. This hero placed himself at the head of all that was left of the old nobility, and set out from his frontier post to save Delhi from its obscene devourer. The affrighted pariah collected all the troops he could muster, emptied the treasury of every farthing, and scattered all the hoard among the soldiers. Most of the Moslems took his money, heartily cursed the giver, and went to their homes: they were not the men to take up arms against Ghazi Taghlak, the champion of the faith. With his Hindus and such few contemptible Mohammedans as his gold could buy, Khusru attempted to withstand his enemy's march; but his forces were utterly routed, the Parvanis were slaughtered, and their master was caught hiding in a garden and beheaded (August, 1321). So ended four months of the worst tyranny that India ever knew.

Taghlak assembled the nobles and officers, and bade them bring forward any scion of the royal family that might have survived, and set him on the throne. There was not one left. "O Ghazi Malik," they shouted with one voice, "for many years thou hast been our buckler against the Mongols and hast warded them from our country. Now thou hast done a faithful work which will be recorded in history: thou hast delivered the Moslems from the yoke of Hindus and pariahs, hast avenged our benefactors and hast earned the gratitude of rich and poor. Be thou our king."



CHAPTER VI

ZENITH OF THE SLAVE DYNASTY

MOHAMMAD TAGHLAK AND FIROZ SHAH

1321-1388 A.D.

THE old soldier did not belie his reputation. The trusty warden of the marches proved a just, high-minded, and vigorous king. Under his firm hand order was restored as if by magic. Everything possible was done to repair the misfortunes of the unhappy ladies of the late court, and to punish their persecutors. Orders were given to reduce the taxation on agricultural lands to a tenth or eleventh of the produce, and to encourage the tillers to greater production. The Hindus were more heavily taxed, yet not to the verge of poverty. In the verse of Amir Khusru:

> "Wisdom and prudence in all that he did were revealed;
> The faculties' hoods seemed under his crown concealed."

Peace and prosperity once more reigned in Hindustan, and two expeditions under Taghlak Shah's eldest son, Prince Jauna, then known as Ulugh Khan, recovered the Deccan provinces as far as Telingana, which the recent troubles had encouraged to revolt. Taghlak himself led his army to Bengal, which had never been even nominally subject to Delhi since the death of Balban, and there he received the homage of the provincial viceroy of Lakhnauti, Nasir-ad-din (grandson of Balban's son Bughra Khan), and carried in chains to Delhi his recalcitrant brother Bahadur Shah, who styled himself king in Eastern Bengal. On his return from this expedition the gallant old Sultan met his death (1325) by the fall of a roof, which crushed him beneath its ruins. His body was found arched over his favourite child, whom he strove in his last moments to protect. There seems little doubt that the catastrophe was treacherously planned by his eldest son, at least if we may accept the authority of the Moorish traveller, Ibn Batuta, who was at Delhi sixteen years later and had his information from some one that actually witnessed the occurrence.

It is in this son, Prince Jauna, who ascended the throne as the Sultan al-Mujahid Mohammad ibn Taghlak, that the main interest of the Karauna dynasty abides. In each of the three dynasties that ruled India throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there was one conspicuously remarkable figure. Among the slave kings it was Balban, the man of action; among the Khaljis it was Ala-ad-din, the crude but daring political

economist; among the Karaunas it was Mohammad Taghlak, the man of ideas. The history of the East, as we have said, centres in its kings, and the history of Eastern dynasties is apt to consist of the rise of one great man and the decay of his successors. Mohammad Taghlak was the most striking figure in mediæval India. He was a man with ideas far beyond his age. Ala-ad-din had brought a vigorous but uncultivated mind to bear upon the problems of government; Mohammad Taghlak was even more daring in his plans, but they were the ideals of a man of trained intellect and tutored imagination. He was perfect in the humanities of his day, a keen student of Persian poetry, a master of style, supremely eloquent in an age of rhetoric, a philosopher trained in logic and Greek metaphysics with whom scholars feared to argue, a mathematician, and a lover of science. Contemporary writers extol his skill in composition and his exquisite calligraphy, and his beautiful coinage bears witness to his critical taste in the art of engrossing Arabic, a language which he read and understood, though he could not speak it fluently.

In short, he was complete in all that high culture could give in that age and country, and he added to the finish of his training a natural genius for original conception, a marvellous memory, and an indomitable will. His idea of a central capital, and his plan of a nominal token currency, like most of his schemes, were good; but he made no allowance for the native dislike of innovations, he hurried his novel measures, impatient of their slow adoption by the people, and when his subjects

grew discontented and rebelled, he punished them without ruth. To him what seemed good must be done at once, and when it proved impossible or unsuccessful, his disappointment reached the verge of frenzy, and he wreaked his wrath indiscriminately upon the unhappy offenders who could not keep pace with his imagination.

FORT OF TAGHLAKABAD, AT DELHI, ENCLOSING TOMB OF TAGHLAK SHAH.

Hence, with the best intentions and with excellent ideas, but with no balance or patience and no sense of proportion, Mohammad Taghlak was a transcendent failure. His reign was one long series of revolts, savagely repressed; his subjects, whom he wished to benefit and on whom he lavished his treasure, grew to loathe him; all his schemes came to nothing, and when, after twenty-six years, he died of a fever on the banks of the Indus,

he left a shattered empire and an impoverished and rebellious people.

Yet he began his reign with everything in his favour. He followed a deeply revered father, and he had a high reputation of his own. He was known to be a great general, and his private life was temperate and even austere. All India was quiet, and the distant provinces had been recovered. The suspicion that his father's sudden end was deliberately planned by the son may have set the people against him; but neither Barani nor Firishta support the story, and it is not certain that it was generally believed. Even if it were, such murders were too common to form an ineffaceable stigma. Mohammad Taghlak failed by his own mistaken government, not on account of an initial crime.

As a rule he never consulted anybody, and formed his projects unassisted; but one day he sent for the historian Barani, who was often in attendance at court, and frankly discussed affairs with him. "My kingdom is diseased," he complained, "and no treatment cures it. The physician cures the headache, and fever follows; he strives to allay the fever, and something else supervenes. So in my kingdom disorders have broken out; if I suppress them in one place, they appear in another; if I allay them in one district, another becomes disturbed. What have former kings said about these disorders?" The man of history cited instances of the abdication of kings in favour of their sons, and of a sovereign's retirement from the affairs of state, which were left to wise vizirs. The Sultan seemed to approve

the idea of abdication, adding, " At present I am angry with my subjects and they are aggrieved with me. The people are acquainted with my feelings, and I am aware of their misery and wretchedness. No treatment that I employ is of any benefit. My remedy for rebels is the sword. I employ punishment and use the sword, so that a cure may be effected by suffering. The more the people resist, the more I inflict chastisement."

The series of tortures and executions described by Ibn Batuta is too horrible to relate, and the frequent scenes at Delhi, which the Moorish traveller witnessed, where trained elephants, with tusks armed with iron blades, tossed the victims in the air, trampled them under foot, and carved them into slices, make one's blood run cold. The Sultan's own brother and nephew did not escape his ferocity: suspected of treason, the former was beheaded in the presence of his brother; the nephew fled to the raja of Kampila, brought destruction upon his protector, and when caught himself, was flayed and roasted alive, and his cooked flesh sent to his family. One can hardly believe that such enormities could have been committed by a man of Mohammad Taghlak's refinement.

Apart from such monstrous barbarities, his great mistake—a capital error in an Eastern country—was that he could not let well or ill alone. He was too clever not to see the ills, but not clever enough to know that they were better undisturbed. On the whole, his was a fine principle, a high ideal; but the reaction when he found his ideal unattainable was violent and deplor-

able. Ibn Batuta knew him well in the latter part of his reign, and was well able to judge his character. This is his portrait of the Sultan:—

"This king is of all men the one who most loves to dispense gifts and to shed blood. His gateway is never free from a beggar whom he has relieved and a corpse which he has slain. Tales are spread abroad among the people of his generosity and courage, as of his bloodshed and vindictiveness towards offenders. With all this he is the humblest of men and the most eager to show justice and truth. The rites of religion find full observance with him, and he is strict in the matter of prayer and in punishing its neglect. But what is preeminent in him is generosity."

The boundless prodigality of the Sultan was indeed one of the causes of his troubles. Even the wealth of India, reinforced by the spoils brought back from the Hindu cities of the Deccan, now again under control, could not meet the extravagance of his generosity and the magnificence of his court. To foreigners he was specially hospitable, preferring them to natives, says the Moorish traveller, Ibn Batuta, who himself enjoyed the Sultan's favour and was presented with fiefs and large sums of money, appointed to a judgeship, and finally sent as Mohammad's ambassador to China. When distinguished strangers came to Delhi, the Sultan would settle upon them the revenues of so many villages or districts, which maintained them in luxury during their visit and enabled them to go home in affluence. The almost incredible largess he scattered among these vis-

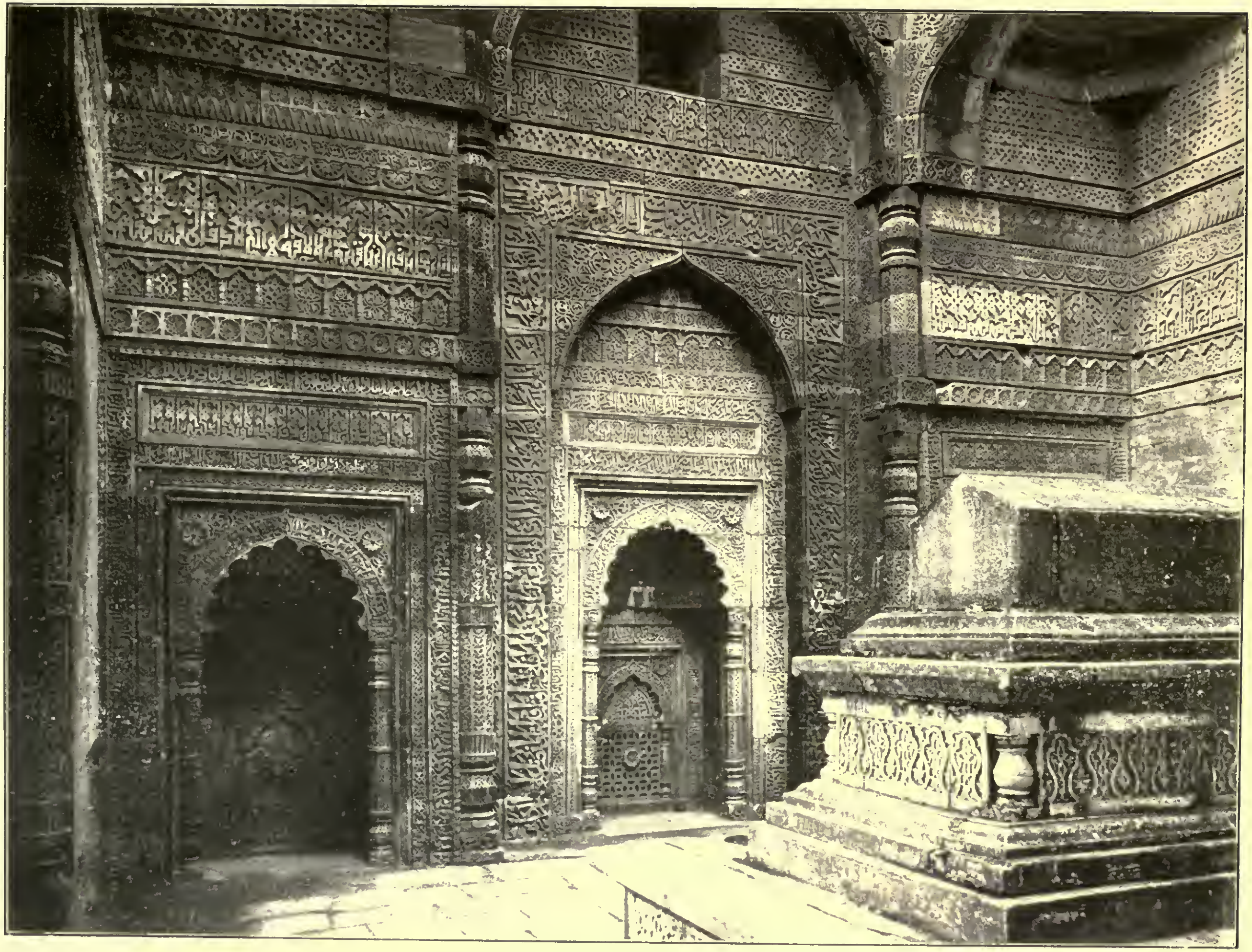
itors and among learned men, poets, officials, and office-seekers of all degrees, impoverished the treasury which the tranquil prosperity of his father's brief reign had replenished, and the immense expeditions which the Sultan prepared for visionary foreign conquests completed the ruin of his finances. His project of conquering Persia kept a huge army standing idle, and another dream of invading China led to a disastrous check in the passes of the Himalayas, where money and blood were spilt like water.

GOLD COIN OF MOHAMMAD TAGHLAK, STRUCK AT DELHI, A. H. 726 (A. D. 1326).

The drain on the treasury then compelled fresh taxation, and there is no doubt that an oppressive fiscal system in a country where the margin of agricultural profit is minute was the chief rock upon which Mohammad Taghlak's government split. The first project which the Sultan formed (says Barani), and which led to the ruin of the country and the decay of the people, was an attempt to get five or ten per cent. more tribute from the lands in the Doab, the fertile plain between the Ganges and the Jumna. He introduced oppressive cesses and made stoppages from the land returns until the peasants were reduced to beggary. The rich became rebels, and the lands lay untilled. The effects spread to other provinces; the peasants became alarmed, lost confidence, abandoned their lands, burned their stacks, turned their cattle loose, and took

to the jungles. Irritated at the failure of the revenue, the Sultan hunted the wretched Hindus like wild beasts, ringed them in the jungles as if they were tigers, and massacred them wholesale. The Doab, Kanauj, and all the country as far as Dalamau, were laid waste, and every man captured was killed and his head hung on the rampart of a town. Landowners and village chiefs were sacrificed as well as humble peasants. A deficiency of seasonable rains aggravated the distress, and famine stalked about the land and mowed down the unhappy people for years.

It was partly the melancholy condition of Hindustan, but still more the inconvenience of a distant northern capital to an empire which was spreading more and more in the Deccan, that induced the Sultan to take the step of transferring the seat of government to Devagiri, which he now renamed Daulatabad, "the empire-city," in the Maratha country not far from Poona. The insecurity of the roads, as well as the long distances, made Delhi an unsuitable centre, and we find that sometimes the revenue of the Deccan was allowed to accumulate for years at Daulatabad from sheer inability to transport it safely to the capital. Whether the Maratha city would have been more convenient may be questioned, at least for the eastern part of the empire, but for the west and south it might have answered well enough. There was nothing preposterous in the Sultan's plan. The provinces of the Deccan—for it was now divided into four—extended as far south as Kulbarga near the Bhima tributary of the Krishna River,

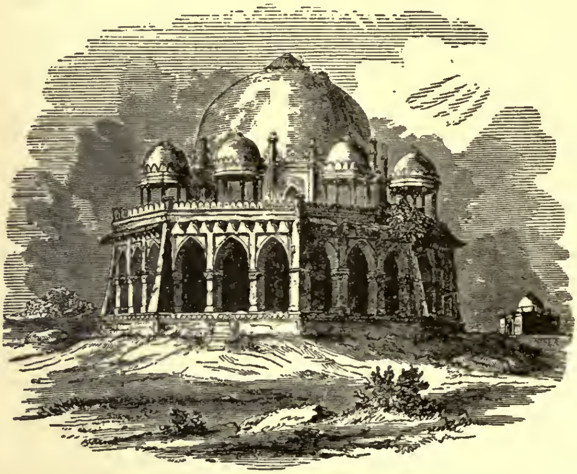


Tomb at the Kutb Minar, Delhi.
From a Photograph.

and though it is not easy to define their eastward boundary, it probably reached to the Godavari, despite the fact that Telingana was rather a tributary state than a part of the empire.

Had Mohammad Taghlak contented himself with merely shifting the official court, the change would have been reasonable and practical. But he must needs transport the whole population of Delhi summarily and *en masse* to the new capital. What this meant may be realized when it is remembered that the Delhi which Ibn Batuta described was a vast city, ten miles across, composed of successive suburbs built round the forts and palaces of different kings. There was Old Delhi, the city of the Ghazni rulers; near by stood Siri, afterwards named the Dar-al-Khilafa, "Abode of the Caliphate," founded by Ala-ad-din; Taghlakabad was the suburb built by the Sultan's father, whose palace was roofed with glittering gilt tiles; and Jahanpanah, "the Refuge of the World," was the name given to the new city which the Sultan dominated from his stately palace. The great wall of Old Delhi, which astonished the Moorish visitor by its thickness and its ingenious arrangement of guardrooms and magazines, had twenty-eight gates; and the great mosque, the Kutb Minar, and the splendid palaces, excited the admiration of the traveller who had seen all the cities of the East and their wonders. He never tires of expatiating on the grandeur of the royal receptions and stately pageants in the "thousand-columned" hall of "the Refuge of the World." Yet the Delhi he saw was a city slowly recov-

ering from what seemed to be a death-blow. All the people had been forcibly removed years before, and the place was still comparatively empty. The heart-broken inhabitants were made to give up their familiar homes and cherished associations, and, taking with them their servants and their children and such belongings as they could carry, to trudge the weary march of seven hundred miles to a strange country which could never



A TOMB AT OLD DELHI.

replace the beautiful city where they were born and to which they were bound by every tie of love and memory. Many died on the way, and of those who reached Daulatabad few could resist the homesickness and despondency that kill the Hindu in exile. They were chiefly Moslems, but they were forced to live in an "infidel" country, and they gave up the ghost in passive despair. The new capital became the nucleus of the cemeteries of the exiles.

The ill-considered plan had failed: Daulatabad was a monument of misdirected energy. The long road, a forty days' journey, between Delhi and the new capital, laid out with infinite care, bordered with trees all the way like an avenue in a park, with frequent inns and rest-houses, only beckoned the exiles home. The Sultan, who had the wisdom to recognize his failure, ordered the people back to Delhi, but few survived to return. He imported "learned men and gentlemen, traders and landholders" from the country to repopulate the deserted capital; but they did not flourish, and it was long before Delhi recovered its prosperity. Ibn Batuta found the great suburbs sparsely occupied, and the city still seemed almost deserted.

It is but just to the Sultan to admit that he did his best to remedy some of his mistakes. If he could not repeople Delhi at a stroke with the rapidity with which he had emptied it, he did much to mitigate the distress caused by famine and excessive taxation. He abolished (in 1341) all taxes beyond the legal alms and the government tithes, and himself sat twice a week to receive the complaints of the oppressed. He distributed daily food to all the people of Delhi for six months in a time of scarcity, and he organized an excellent system of government loans to agriculturists which would have been of great service but for the dishonesty of the overseers. To meet the heavy drain upon the treasury he made his famous experiment of a token currency, possibly taking the idea from the paper money issued by Khubilai Khan in China or

from the paper notes with which a Mongol khan of Persia had recently endeavoured to cheat his subjects. But Mohammad Taghlak's forced currency was not intended to defraud, and as a matter of fact accidentally enriched the people, whilst the substitution of minted copper for paper was a new idea. The copper token was to pass at the value of the contemporary silver tanka, and of course its acceptance depended upon the credit of the public treasury. Mohammad Taghlak has been called "the Prince of Moneyers," and there is no doubt that he devoted much attention to his coinage and dealt with it in a scientific way. "So important indeed," says Edward Thomas, the greatest authority on Indian numismatics, "did he consider all matters connected with the public currency, that one of the earliest acts of his reign was to remodel the coinage, to adjust its divisions to the altered relative values of the precious metals, and to originate new and more exact representations of the subordinate circulation. The leading motive seems to have been the utilization of the stores of gold which filled the Sultan's treasuries; and, without proposing to introduce a definite gold standard, which under the surrounding circumstances would doubtless have proved impracticable, he appears to have aimed at a large expansion of the currency of the land by direct means, associated with an equitable revision of the basis of exchange between gold

BRASS MONEY OF MOHAMMAD TAGHLAK, STRUCK AT DELHI, A. H. 731 (1330-31 A. D.).

and silver, which had been disturbed by the large accessions of the former from the Deccan, unaccompanied by any proportionate addition to the supply of the latter."

He was thus an expert in currency questions, and when he introduced his copper tokens he was taking a step of which he should have known the consequences. The curious point is that, while doubtless fully aware that the value of the token depended upon the credit of the treasury, he forgot that it was absolutely essential to the success of his innovation that none but the state should issue the tokens. In those days, however, there was no milling or other device of costly machinery to distinguish the issues of the royal mint from private forgeries. To forge in gold was expensive, but any skilled Hindu engraver could copy the inscriptions and strike copper tokens of the value of tankas in his own behalf. The result was natural. "The promulgation of this edict," says Barani, "turned the house of every Hindu into a mint, and the Hindus of the various provinces coined copper coins by hundreds of thousands and tens of millions. With these they paid their tribute, and with these they purchased horses, arms, and fine things of all kinds. The rajas, village headmen, and landowners grew rich upon these copper coins, but the state was impoverished. In those places where fear of the Sultan's edict prevailed, the gold tanka rose to be worth a hundred of the [token] tankas. Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his workshop, and the treasury was filled with these tokens. So low did they

fall that they were not valued more than pebbles or potsherds. The old coin, from its great scarcity, rose four-fold and five-fold in value. When trade was interrupted on every side, and when the copper tankas had become more worthless than clods, the Sultan repealed his edict, and in great wrath he proclaimed that whosoever possessed copper coins should bring them to the treasury and receive the old ones in exchange. Thousands of men from various quarters who possessed thousands of these copper coins, and caring nothing for them had flung them into corners along with their copper pots, now brought them to the treasury and received in exchange gold tankas and silver tankas. So many of these copper tankas were brought to the treasury that heaps of them rose up in Taghlakabad like mountains," and there they were seen a century later in the days of Mubarak Shah II.

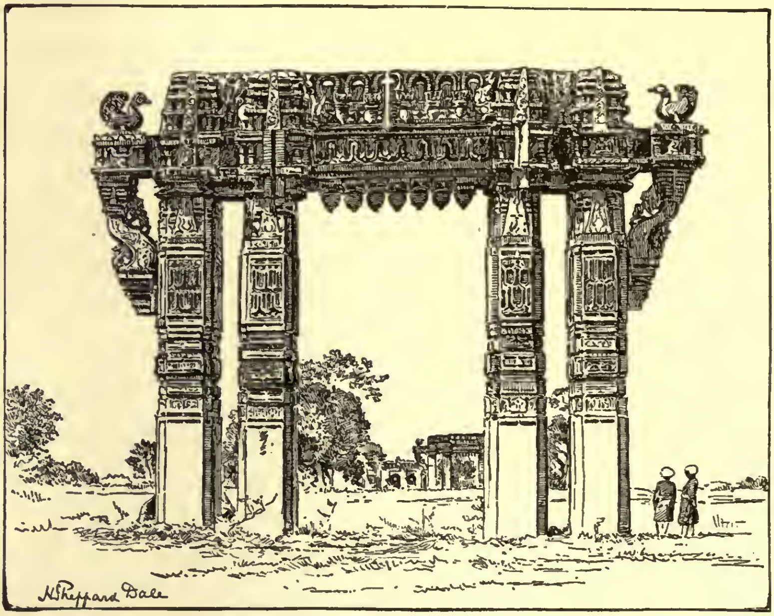
All these innovations harassed and annoyed the people and made the Sultan unpopular. The failure of his schemes embittered him, and his extreme severity toward all who contravened his enactments brought wide-spread discontent and rebellion. There were other causes for insurrection. The provincial officials were no longer the old feudal landowners, attached by ties of race and gratitude to their Turkish sovereigns. The Turks had been displaced; the triumph of the Khaljis had loosened the old bonds that knitted the governing class together; a new dynasty that was neither pure Turk nor Khalji was in power, and the officers governing the provinces were hungry adventurers, often for-

eigners, Afghans, Persians, Khorasanis, and Mongols, whom the Sultan overwhelmed with costly gifts. These men had none of the old loyalty, such as it was, and it was from them, known as "the foreign amirs," that the revolts came which shattered the foundations of the empire.

In the early years of his reign Mohammad Taghlak had ruled a state wider, larger, and more splendid than any of his predecessors. Whilst even the great Ala-ad-din struck his coins only at Delhi and Devagiri, the name and titles of Mohammad Taghlak shone upon the issues of the mints of Delhi, Agra, Tirhut (then called Taghlakpur), Daulatabad, Warangal (then called Sultanpur), Lakhnauti, Satgaon, and Sonargaon in Bengal. A contemporary writer gives a list of twenty-three provinces subject to the Sultan of Delhi, from Sivistan, Uchh, Multan, and Gujarat, by the Indus, to Lakhnauti in Bengal and Jajnagar in Orissa, and from Lahore near the Himalayas to Dvara-samudra and the Malabar coast. Never again till the time of Aurangzib did a king of Delhi hold so wide a sway. Piece by piece the empire dropped away. One province after another revolted, and though the Sultan was usually victorious and punished the rebels without mercy, he could not be everywhere at the same time, and while one insurrection was being crushed, another sprang up at the other end of his dominions. We hear of revolts in Multan, in Bengal, in Ma'bar, and in Lahore; again in Multan, then at Samana; now at Warangal and next near Oudh; at Karra and in Bidar; at Devagiri and in Gu-

jarat. Some of them were never suppressed, and Bengal and the Deccan were lost to the kingdom.

It was in vain that Mohammad Taghlak invoked the shade of a great name and obtained the sanction of the Abbasid caliph of Cairo to his title as orthodox king of India. In vain he received the mantle and



AN ANCIENT GATEWAY AT WARANGAL.

diploma of investiture (1343), and welcomed a beggarly descendant of the famous caliphs of Baghdad with peculiar solemnity and humble deference to his splendid court at Delhi and even set the sacred foot upon his own proud neck. Nothing could restore the loyalty of the people or of their governors. Experiments and innovations had harassed them and brought much suffer-

ing; frequent executions and massacres had exasperated them. No one trusted the changeable and impetuous king, whose fiery temper had been maddened by disappointment and revolts, and who punished small and great offences with the same merciless ferocity. The end came while he was putting down a rebellion in Gujarat and Sind. He pursued the chief rebel toward the mouth of the Indus; but he was already ill with fever, and, still full of eager plans for crushing the Sumras of Thatta and seizing the rebel leader whom they were sheltering, Mohammad Taghlak died on the banks of the river in March, 1351. He had brought exceptional abilities and a highly cultivated mind to the task of governing the greatest Indian empire that had so far been known, and he had failed stupendously. It was a tragedy of high intentions self-defeated.

After his death India recovered like a sick man after an exhausting fever, and the troubles subsided as the waves after a storm. The disturbing force was gone, and the people showed that they could be quiet enough if they were let alone. Mohammad Taghlak left no sons, but his cousin, Firoz Shah, was at once elected to the throne by the chiefs of the army then fighting in Sind, and after defeating the rebels he had no difficulty in making his accession sure. An attempt to set up a pretended son of the late Sultan at Delhi collapsed on the approach of Firoz, and thenceforward during the thirty-seven years of his reign there was not a single rebellion. This was certainly not due to any vigour of the Sultan. Firoz was a man of forty-five,

whose mother was a Hindu princess of Dipalpur, who nobly gave herself to his father in order to save her people from the exactions with which they were vindictively oppressed when the Raja Mal Bhatti at first proudly refused to give a Rajput princess to a mere half-breed Turk. Their son had been carefully brought up by his brave uncle, the warden of the marches, and had been trained in the art of government by that talented but wrong-headed projector Mohammad Taghlak, with whom he lived as a son for many years. The lessons of his preceptor seem to have been read backwards; at all events Firoz reversed his predecessor's policy in every detail.

It was characteristic of the merciful and pious disposition of the new king that, after burying his cousin with all honour, he sought out the victims of his ferocity or their representatives, and endeavoured as far as possible to indemnify them for their sufferings and losses. When this was done, he collected the attested documents in which they admitted the reparation they had received and expressed themselves satisfied. All these papers he placed in the tomb of the tyrant, in the pious hope "that God would show mercy to my patron and friend." It was a gracious and beautiful act. Firoz possessed in an exceptional degree the milk of human kindness, that supreme gift of sympathy and tenderness which made the whole Indian world his kin. He has been charged with weakness and fatuity, but it was a weakness that came very near the Christian ideal of love and charity, and it brought peace and hap-

piness to a land which had been sorely tormented. Like his namesake, Firoz the Khalji, the new Sultan had a horror of bloodshed and torture. He had seen too much of both under his cousin's rule, and he resolved that they should cease. "The great and merciful God," he wrote in his own touching memoirs, "taught me, His servant, to hope and seek for His mercy by devoting myself to preventing the unlawful slaying of Moslems and the infliction of any kind of torture upon them or upon any men."

So gentle a king was not made for the glories of conquest; he abhorred war and clearly was no general; if not content to leave the revolted provinces alone, he made little effort to recover them. The Deccan was allowed to become independent under Hasan Gangu, the founder of the Bahmanid dynasty, whose Sultans ruled all the provinces south of the Vindhyas for 180 years. Bengal also remained independent, though Firoz twice attempted to bring it back under subjection. On the first campaign (1353) he was absent from his capital eleven months, and after winning a great battle, in which 180,000 Bengalis are said to have been slain, he refused to storm the fort of Ikdala in which the King of Bengal had taken refuge, for fear of shedding more of the blood of the faithful, and sadly returned to Delhi. In the second expedition, six or seven years later (1359-60), though he had seventy thousand cavalry, infantry "past numbering," 470 elephants, and all the paraphernalia of war, he concluded a treaty of peace with the Bengal king, and then proceeded to lose him-

self and his army while elephant-hunting in Padmavati, in the wild of Jajnagar, and only after great privations and much difficulty found his way back to Delhi, where no news had been received of him for six months. He had been away two years and a half.

A later expedition to conquer Thatta, which Taghlak had failed to subdue, occupied about the same length

LOW-CASTE BENGALIS.

of time. With ninety thousand horse and 480 elephants Firoz marched to Bhakkar. Part of the force descended the Indus in five thousand boats, the rest marching along the bank. Famine and pestilence reduced the horses, and after a battle with the Samma Jam, or ruler of Sind, who had a large army and had never owned an overlord, the Sultan made a strategic retreat towards Gujarat, pursued by the enemy, who captured his boats. On the retreat all the horses died; treach-

Hindu Snake Charmers and Jugglers

India, the home of the cobra, has always been famous for its snake-charmers and its tricks of legerdemain. With tom-toms and shrill pipe the charmer lures the hooded serpent from the basket, teasing and playing with it, and usually accompanying the performance with some clever tricks of sleight of hand.

erous guides inveigled the army into the salt marshes of Kachh, and they lost themselves in the desert. Again for six months the Sultan and his army disappeared from human ken; not a word of them reached Delhi, and the vizir had to forge cheering despatches to relieve the public anxiety. The Sultan, however, doggedly held to his purpose, refitted his army in Gujarat, sent thrice to Delhi for reinforcements, and in a second invasion, after some trouble in crossing the Indus, succeeded in occupying Sind, and starved his foe into surrender. The native ruler was brought to Delhi in all honour, and his son was enthroned in his stead. This was the only victorious exploit of the reign of Firoz, except the reduction of Nagarkot, and it was won at great cost. The Sultan had again been away from his capital for two years and a half.

In any other reign there would undoubtedly have been a revolution and a rival king during these long absences. But Firoz possessed a treasure in his vizir, a converted Hindu of good family from Telingana, named Makbul Khan, who had held the highest offices under the dangerous favour of Mohammad Taghlak. Over Firoz the wise though illiterate Hindu gained such influence that the Sultan used to say that Khan-i-Jahan, "lord of the world," as he was termed in virtue of his office, was the real king of Delhi. So fond was the Sultan of his invaluable vizir that he allowed an income of over a thousand a year to every son that was born to him, and yet more by way of marriage portion to each daughter; and as Makbul was an uxorious person,

who kept two thousand ladies in his harem, ranging from olive Greeks to saffron Chinese, these endowments must have reached a considerable sum. But Makbul was worth his money. As the Sultan's deputy and *alter ego*, he held the state securely while his master was away, stood always between him and official worries, and administered the kingdom with exceptional skill and wisdom. If the borders of the realm were more limited than before, the smaller area was better developed and made more productive.

It was doubtless due to Makbul's influence, seconded by the Rajput blood which Firoz inherited from Bibi Naila, that the new régime was marked by the utmost gentleness and consideration for the peasantry. It will be remembered that the preceding Sultan had instituted a system of government loans in aid of the agriculturists. These loans the peasants, who had not yet recovered from the distress caused by Mohammad Taghlak's exactions, were wholly unable to repay. By the advice of the vizir the official records of these debts were publicly destroyed in the Sultan's presence, and the people were given a clean bill. Taxation was brought back to the limits prescribed by the law of the Koran, and any attempts at extortion were sternly punished. "Thus," says Afif, the panegyrist of the reign, who was a frequent attendant at the court of Firoz, "the peasants grew rich and were satisfied. Their homes were filled with corn and goods, horses and furniture; every one had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments and no house without good

beds and divans. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The whole realm of Delhi was blessed with the bounties of God."

Nor was this all. The Sultan was an enthusiastic builder. He had a passion for naming and founding towns. When a son (Fath Khan, "victory-lord") was born to him on his first march to Delhi after his accession, he immediately founded a town on the site of the happy event and called it Fathabad, "the city of Fath," or "of victory." On his Bengal campaigns he rechristened Ikdala "Azadpur," and Panduah "Firozabad," and founded the new city of Jaunpur (Jaunanpur) in honour of his cousin, the late king. In the province of Delhi he not only built Fathabad and Hisar Firoza, but also a second Firozabad on the Jumna, ten miles from the capital, where he chiefly resided, and whither the people of Delhi used to resort in crowds, making holiday by the river, along whose banks the new city spread for six miles. Here he set up one of the two Asoka pillars which he had removed from their original places. He had famous architects in Malik Ghazi Shahna and Abd-al-Hakk, who employed an immense

A MOHAMMEDAN WOMAN.

staff of skilled workmen, all duly paid from the treasury after the plans had been approved and the necessary grants assigned.

One result especially of these new foundations was of incalculable benefit to the country. To supply his new city of Hisar Firoza the Sultan constructed (1355) a double system of canals, from the Jumna and the Sutlaj, one of which, "the old Jumna canal," to this day supplies the district with irrigation along two hundred miles of its ancient course, and now brings the water to Delhi. A later historian, Firishta, credits Firoz with no less than 845 public works, canals, dams, reservoirs, bridges, baths, forts, mosques, colleges, monasteries, and inns for pilgrims and travellers, to say nothing of repairing former buildings, such as the Kutb Minar and many of the tombs of the kings of Delhi. Curiously, not a single road is mentioned, though that was the greatest want of India. Of all these, the canals were the chief blessing to the people. By the improved irrigation, they were able to get in two harvests instead of one. The superintendence of the canals was entrusted to skilled engineers, who examined the banks during the rainy season and floods and reported on their condition. In return for this benefit the Sultan levied a water-rate of ten per cent. on the outlay. Another wise step was the reclaiming of waste lands by the government, the proceeds of which were devoted to the support of religion and learning. Firoz annually granted more than a third of a million pounds (thirty-six lacs) to learned men and pious endowments, and

a sum equal to nearly a million pounds (one hundred lacs) was distributed every year in pensions and relief to the poor. The Sultan was not only a builder but a gardener. He planted twelve hundred gardens near Delhi and many elsewhere, and the produce, among which white and black grapes of seven varieties are mentioned, brought in some £8000 net profit to the treasury. The three sources of water-dues, reclaimed lands, and market-gardens added nearly thirty thousand pounds to the annual revenue, which Afif reckoned at six crores and eighty-five lacs of tankas (£6,850,000) throughout the reign—about a third of the revenues of Akbar two centuries later. Of this the fertile Doab alone contributed £800,000.

It is not clear whether this revenue includes the rents of the villages and lands which were assigned to public officials as salary, but it probably does not. This method of paying public servants was strongly condemned by the Sultan Ala-ad-din, as tending to feudal power and fostering rebellion; and Firoz was the first to adopt it generally. During his reign it worked well, but it may be questioned whether it did not contribute to the break-up of the kingdom which ensued after his death. The grants indeed often amounted to viceroyalties of great power, and we find large districts and even provinces assigned to eminent nobles. Thus Karra and Dalamau were granted to Mardan Daulat with the title of "King of the East"; Oudh and Sandila and Koil formed separate fiefs; Jaunpur and Zafarabad were given to another amir;

Gujarat to Sikandar Khan, and Bihar to Bir Afghan. All these nobles were expected to defend their frontiers and manage their internal affairs. Another deduction which must be considered in estimating the revenue was due to the Sultan's system of allowing his great fief-holders so much for every well-grown, good-looking, and well-dressed slave, a captive in war, whom they furnished for the service of the court. When the feudatories, that is, most of the high officers of the state, came to pay their annual visit to the capital, they brought not only presents for the Sultan, of horses, elephants, camels, mules, arms, gold and silver vessels, and the like, but also from ten to a hundred slaves apiece, for whom a corresponding deduction was allowed from their taxes or rents. The chief who brought the most valuable contribution was held in most esteem, and thus the system of annual presents to the king, which became so onerous a tax under the Moghul emperors, began to prevail. The slaves were well educated at court, and trained either for the army, for palace employment, or for mechanical trades. There were forty thousand of them on guard at the palace, and twelve thousand artisans in Delhi, and altogether not less than 180,000 slaves were supported by the government. They had a department of their own, with a treasury, muster-master, and distinct officials. When the Sultan went abroad he was escorted by thousands of these slaves—archers, swordsmen, halberdiers, and packmen mounted on buffaloes. Never before had slaves been so largely employed, though it is true that

Ala-ad-din had mustered over fifty thousand of them over half a century before.

The court to which these pampered servants ministered was luxurious but orderly. It is true the Sul-

TOMB OF FIROZ SHAH AT DELHI.

tan was somewhat addicted to wine, and on one occasion, in the midst of the Bengal campaign, the general Tatar Khan discovered his sovereign in an undignified position, lying half-dressed on his couch, with a mysterious sheet concealing something under the bed.

Tatar Khan saw what was the matter, and both were speechless with surprise. At last he began a little sermon on the wickedness of indulgence at such a time of anxiety. The Sultan inquired what he meant, and asked innocently if anything untoward had happened. The khan pointed to the hidden wine-cups under the bed and looked solemn. Firoz said he liked a modest drop now and then to moisten his throat, but Tatar was not to be mollified. Then the Sultan swore that he would drink no more wine while the khan was with the army. So the general thanked God and went out. But Firoz soon afterwards bethought him that the khan was much needed at the other end of the kingdom, and sent him there in all haste. Several times the Sultan was lectured by holy men on his weakness, but he worked off his excesses by vigorous hunting, to which he was enthusiastically devoted, and the vice cannot have gone to such lengths as to interfere with affairs of state—at least so long as the able Hindu vizir was there to control them.

The testimony of all contemporary chroniclers shows that Firoz was adored by the people. It was not only that he reformed abuses, checked extortion, reduced taxation, increased irrigation, and enlarged the markets and opportunities of labour, but he was "a father to his people," took care of the needy and unemployed, refused to dismiss aged officials, but let their sons act for them—"the veteran," he said, "may thus stay at home in comfort, while the young ride forth in their strength"—he contrived the marriages of poor Mos-

lems who could not otherwise afford the usual dowries, and provided state hospitals for the sick of all classes, native and foreign. Kindly to the Hindus, he yet sternly forbade public worship of idols and painting of portraits, and taxed the Brahmans, who had hitherto been exempt from the poll-tax imposed upon non-Moslems. A devout Mohammedan himself, he kept the fasts and feasts and public prayers, and in the weekly litany the names of his great predecessors were commemorated as well as his own and that of the caliph who had sanctioned his authority. When an old man he went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the legendary hero Salar Mas'ud at Bahraich, humbly shaved, as an act of piety. He never did anything without consulting

GOLD COIN OF FIROZ SHAH, A. H. 788 (A. D. 1386).

the Koran, and even selected a governor in accordance with a *fal*, or lucky omen in the sacred book. Making every allowance for the exaggeration of the court chronicler, his panegyric, written after the Sultan's death, is probably not misplaced: "Under Firoz all men, high and low, bound and free, lived happily and free from care. The court was splendid. Things were plentiful and cheap. Nothing untoward happened during his reign. No village remained waste, no land uncultivated."

His old age was troubled by the loss of his great vizir, who died in 1371; three years later the death of the crown prince Fath Khan shook the aged Sultan

grievously. He surrendered all authority into the hands of the late vizir's son, the second Khan-i-Jahan, and when the latter fell by the influence of Prince Mohammad in 1387, the old king transferred the royal elephants to the prince and allowed him to rule as he pleased. Unfortunately Mohammad was given to pleasure, and his misgovernment excited a formidable rebellion of the slaves who formed so important a faction in Delhi. Firoz himself had to come forward to quell the revolt, which instantly subsided at his appearance, and the prince fled. The Sultan next appointed his grandson Taghlak Shah II, son of Fath Khan, to administer the realm, and very soon afterwards died, "worn out with weakness," at the age of ninety, in September, 1388. No king since Nasir-ad-din had so appealed to the affections of his subjects, and in the brief and modest memoirs which the Sultan left, he recites some of the successful efforts he made to repress irreligion and wickedness, and to restore good government, just law, kindness, and generosity to the people, in the place of torture and bloodshed and oppression. "Through the mercy which God has shown to me," he wrote, "these cruelties and terrors have been changed to tenderness, kindness, and compassion. I thank the All-Bountiful God for the many and various blessings which He has bestowed upon me."

CHAPTER VII

DISINTEGRATION

PROVINCIAL DYNASTIES

1388-1451 A.D.

THE long and prosperous reign of Firoz Shah had assuaged the troubles of the people, but it had not strengthened the authority of the crown. Firoz was loved, and perhaps respected, but certainly not feared. A generation had grown up who knew nothing of the inexorable despotism of a Balban, an Ala-ad-din, or a Mohammad Taghlak, and the dread of the sovereign was like a forgotten dream. The people did not rebel, because they were contented and had nothing to gain by revolution. The success of the reign was due to the personal character of the Sultan and his prudent vizir: there was nothing to warrant the expectation that similar tranquillity would follow the accession of a new ruler. On the contrary, there were elements of the Sultan's own creating that made for disintegration.

The system of depending upon a powerful body of slaves for civil and military service led to far-reaching consequences. Many of these slaves were converted—or nominally converted—Hindus, and to some of these renegades were assigned the great fiefs of the empire.

However sincere their loyalty to Firoz, their master, they were bound by no such ties to his successors, and their influence tended to encourage that Hindu independence which had been fostered by the Sultan's mild rule. The intermarriage of the royal family and other dignitaries with Hindus could produce no real amalgamation between peoples effectually sundered alike by race, religion, and social custom. The Hindus paid tribute when compelled, but their free tribes and aristocratic chiefs were always eager to shake off the yoke of the foreigners, and in the years following the death of Firoz one of the most notable features of the disturbed period was the large part played in politics by Hindu leaders, whether slaves converted to the court religion, or rajas who had asserted their independence, but were not above plotting insurrection with their renegade fellow countrymen. Thus, on the one hand, we see the great provinces held in fief by successful courtiers and slaves, often renegade Hindus, whose power tended to become hereditary and to develop independent dynasties; on the other, a universal revival of the old Hindu chiefships and of the independence of the hill tribes.

A strong ruler might possibly have stemmed the tide which was engulfing the power of Delhi, but even he must have bent and broken before the storm which burst upon India ten years after the death of Firoz. In those ten years there was no king of even moderate capacity. Fath Khan, the hope of his father, was dead; the next son, Zafar, was also gone. The old Sultan's

grandson, Taghlak II, was young and foolish, addicted to wine and dissipation, and the amirs and palace slaves rose and killed him before he had lolled on the throne five months. Another grandson, Abu Bekr, was opposed by his uncle Mohammad, the prince whom the slaves had expelled from his regency under Firoz, and who had since established some sort of authority from Samana to Nagarkot in the Panjab, and after several unsuccessful efforts secured Delhi in 1390. His four years' reign was vexed by a series of rebellions; the Hindu chiefs were everywhere in revolt, the great feudatories under no control; and the persecution and banishment of the foreign slaves (whose nationality was tested by a Hindi shibboleth) did nothing to mitigate their disruptive influence. Mohammad's son Humayun, proudly entitled "Alexander" (Sikandar Shah), died after a reign of six weeks, and though his brother Mahmud occupied the throne for eighteen years (1394-1412), that throne was for some time set up at Kanauj, and even when at Old Delhi, his cousin Nasrat Shah, son of Fath Khan, held a rival court at the new capital of Firozabad close by; thus there were two kings at Delhi, and both were mere puppets in the hands of ambitious amirs.

Such was the chaotic state of the kingdom of Delhi when Timur descended upon it with his ninety-two regiments of a thousand horse each. The great conqueror, whose career has become familiar through the pages of Gibbon and the drama of Marlowe, had already overrun all Persia and Mesopotamia as far as the fron-

tier of the Ottoman empire in Asia Minor on the west, and had occupied Afghanistan on the east, before the wealth of India drew him to the invariable road of Central Asian invaders. When he laid the project before his council of war there was strenuous dissuasion. Five great rivers to cross, dense jungles, fierce warriors led by terrible rajas couched in forest fastnesses like wild beasts in their lairs, and mailed elephants with deadly armed tusks—these, said the chiefs, were obstacles enough. But others recalled the example of Mahmud the Idol-breaker with far inferior forces, and Timur's sons urged the surpassing riches of India and the pre-eminence of such a possession, while the men of religion dwelt on the duty of the Holy War against the infidels. The objectors still insisted that, even if successful, their hardy race would surely degenerate and their descendants grow soft and effeminate even as the natives of Hindustan—a prediction verified two centuries later—but Timur was not to be put off. "My object," he wrote or caused to be written in his memoirs, "my object in the invasion of Hindustan is to lead a campaign against the infidels, to convert them to the true faith according to the command of Mohammed (on whom and his family be the blessing and peace of God), to purify the land from the defilement of misbelief and polytheism, and to overthrow the temples and idols, whereby we shall be champions and soldiers of the faith before God." His will prevailed over the doubting men of war, and the venture was resolved upon.

THE BALA HISSAR GATE, KABUL.

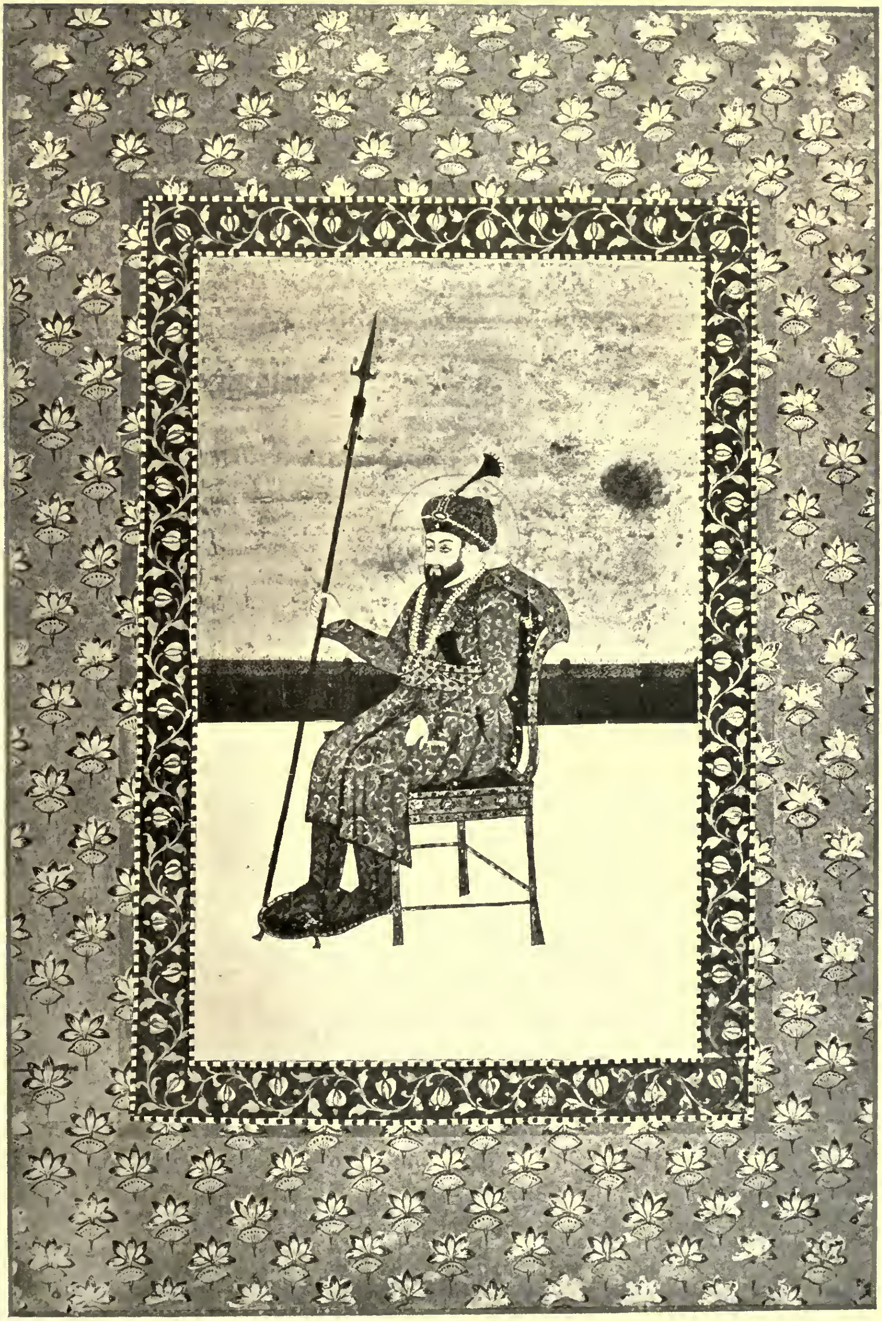
From Roskoschny's Afghanistan.

An advanced force under his grandson Pir Mohammad, who held Kabul, descended upon the Indus at the close of 1397, and besieged Multan. Timur himself, confirmed in his resolution by his forerunner's report of the distracted state of the country, left Samarkand in March, 1398, struggled through ice and snow, descended appalling precipices in pursuit of the infidel tribes, and crossed the Indus at Attok, where Jalal-ad-din had swum the river when escaping from Timur's ancestor, Chingiz Khan. There he threw a pontoon across the Chinab, and, joined by his grandson, who had now taken Multan, pressed steadily eastward. Fearful stories of the plundering and massacring of the people preceded him, and the inhabitants of Dipalpur fled to the protection of the Rajput fortress of Bhatnir; but all in vain, for Timur stormed it and slew ten thousand Hindus in an hour. Sirsuti was found deserted, Fathabad was empty; every one had hurried panic-stricken into the jungle. In December the invading host stood encamped on the plain of Panipat, the battle-field of Delhi, but there was no man to oppose them. A week later Timur was before the capital.

On December 17th, 1398, the decisive battle was fought. Timur crossed the Jumna and carefully surveyed the ground. He took unusual precautions to allay the terrors of his troopers, who were extravagantly nervous about the invincible elephants of the enemy. He issued calthrops to the troops to throw before these alarming beasts, and defended the camp with a strong abatis of brushwood and trees, behind

which he placed the women, stores, and cattle, as well as "the good and learned men of the army" who, on being consulted where they would wish to be stationed during the battle, modestly expressed a wish to be "placed with the ladies." The immense number of Hindu prisoners, reckoned at one hundred thousand, could not safely be left in the camp, and Timur ordered them all to be slain in cold blood. Then taking an augury from the Koran, and scouting the warnings of the astrologers, he set out his forces for battle.

The Indian army under Ikbal Khan and the Sultan Mahmud did not refuse the challenge. They mustered ten thousand horse and forty thousand foot, with 125 elephants in mail, with poisoned blades fastened to their tusks and howdahs fitted with hand-grenades and fireworks to frighten the horses. The battle was ordered on each side in the usual manner: vaward, rearward, centre, right and left wings. Timur rode to a neighbouring knoll and reconnoitred them as they approached, then bowed himself on the earth and prayed to God for victory. He mounted in full assurance that his prayer was heard. Completing his arrangements, he strengthened his vaward and right wing, and the signal for the battle was given by the roll of drums. A well-concealed flanking movement took the Indian advance-guard in the rear and scattered them. The right wing under Pir Mohammad drove in the Indian left by a steady discharge of arrows, and followed it up with the sword. The left, equally successful, pursued the enemy's right as far as the gates of Delhi.



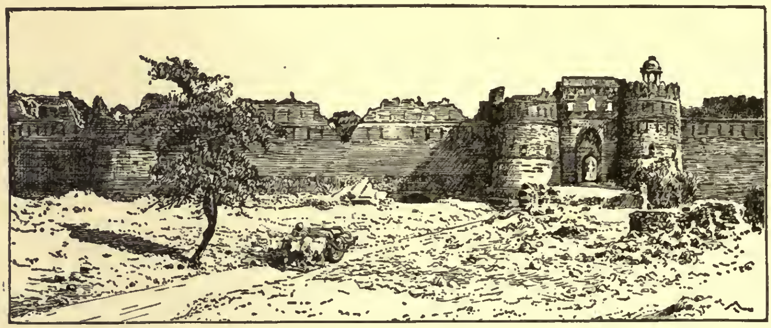
Timur Lang, Tamerlane the Great.
From a rare MS. in the possession of Mr. Karl W. Hiersemann, Leipzig.

The Indian centre still held out under Ikbal and the Sultan, but Timur sent orders to pick off the mahauts and wound the riderless elephants. The Indian soldiers, says the conqueror, "showed no lack of courage, but bore themselves manfully in the fight;" they were outnumbered and outgeneralled, however, and finally took to flight. The Sultan and Ikbal Khan escaped with difficulty to the city, trampling their own men under the elephants in the crush, and that night they fled to the mountains, basely leaving their wives and children behind. The victory was complete, and Timur, pitching his camp by the tomb of Firoz, gave thanks to God with tears.

The leading men came out and surrendered the city on the following day, and in deference to the pleading of the ulama and other wise and pious Moslems the conqueror accepted a ransom for the lives of the people. There was to be no sack and no massacre. Unfortunately the collection of the ransom led to brawls on the 26th, and Timur's humane intentions were frustrated. It was no doubt difficult to restrain a great army of Turks, who had been accustomed for years to slaughter and pillage wherever they went. For three days the unhappy city was turned into a shambles. "All my army, no longer under control, rushed to the city and thought of nothing but killing, plundering, and making prisoners." Every man got from twenty to a hundred captives, many of whom Timur sent to Samarkand to teach the famous handicrafts of India to his own people. There were immense spoils of rubies, diamonds,

pearls, gold and silver ornaments and vessels, silks and brocades. Only the quarter inhabited by the sayyids and ulama—the heads of the Moslem religion—escaped the general sack. Siri, Jahanpanah, and Old Delhi had been completely gutted. "Although I was wishful to spare them, I could not succeed, for it was the will of God that this calamity should fall upon the city."

After a fortnight of state functions, feasts, and levees, it occurred to Timur that he had come to Hindustan to wage a Holy War upon the infidels, and that he ought to be stirring (Jan. 1, 1399). After entering the fort of Firozabad on the Jumna, and praying in its mosque, he took Mirat by storm, massacred the men, took the women and children prisoners, and razed the town to the earth. He then pushed north to Hardwar, where he had heard of the image of the sacred cow from whose mouth the Ganges was supposed to flow and whither the Hindus went in pilgrimage to the mysterious source of the holy river. Such superstition roused the zealot's passion, and the wretched Indians were



INDRAPAT, OR OLD DELHI.

made to pay dearly for the legend. Crossing the Ganges, after a veritable orgy of slaughter, the soldier of the faith prostrated himself in gratitude to God, and felt that he had accomplished his mission in Hindustan. He had come, he said, for two purposes: to war with infidels for the sake of the rewards of the next world, and to seize this world's riches, since "plunder in war for the faith is as lawful to Moslems as their mother's milk, and the consumption of that which is lawful is a means of grace." Lacs of infidels had been despatched "to the fires of hell," and the zealous warriors of Islam were laden with spoils. Enough had been done, and it was time to turn homewards and see what was going on at the other end of Asia. Fighting his way through the Siwalik hills, beneath Mussooree, driving the heathen into the Himalaya valleys, plundering and burning villages as he proceeded, seizing Nagarkot and Jammu, and detaching a force to take Lahore, Timur and his invincible host marched beneath the Himalayas of India, and, after a final rhinoceros hunt, disappeared up the Afghan valleys. In March the fearful visitation was over.

When the Scourge of God had departed, men came out of their hiding-places like the hare when the hunter has passed. Fortunately, in his haste to return to Samarkand, Timur had been able to harry but a small part of India; but wherever his army had trampled, from the Indus to the Ganges, over the whole of the Panjab, desolation and famine were left behind. Thenceforward, until the days of the Moghul empire, Delhi never re-

gained her old ascendency. For a time Ikbal Khan, the vizir, held the capital, drove out Nasrat Shah, and made vigorous efforts to put down the growing hostility of the Hindu chiefs, who were now independent at Etawa, Gwalior, and many other strongholds. Sultan Mahmud found Delhi insupportable with all the power in the vizir's hands, and set up a separate court at Kanauj, until the death of Ikbal in a battle with Khizr Khan, the viceroy of Multan, in November, 1405, set him free and enabled him to return to the capital and rule a kingdom which had shrunk to little more than the Doab and Rohtak. The next six or seven years were spent in a struggle between the great feudatories, in which the dissolute and incompetent Sultan played a sorry part, and when Mahmud died in 1412 there was no king left at Delhi. The government was conducted by the Lodi amir Daulat Khan, but he made no assumption of royal dignity.

Nor did his successor assume the title of king. Khizr Khan, the founder of the dynasty of Sayyids, who claimed descent from the family of the Arabian Prophet, had prudently cast in his lot with Timur when the "noble Tartarian" invaded India; and on taking the command at Delhi, in May, 1414, he made no pretension to be more than Timur's deputy. There is no evidence, however, that this allegiance was anything more than a politic fiction, whilst the coinage issued by Khizr bore the names of Firoz and other defunct kings of the late dynasty as guarantees of its authenticity. The history of the Sayyid dynasty, which num-

bered four rulers, consisted mainly in a perpetual struggle to retain some sort of control of the small territory still attached to the kingdom of Delhi. How small this was will be realized when it is stated that almost yearly campaigns were undertaken to extort the annual tribute from the Hindu raja of Katehr (Rohilkhand, northeast of Delhi), from Mewat on the south, and from Etawa in the Doab. We read of frequent rebellions in the northwest at Sirhind and Jalandhar, generally headed by Jasrath, a Gakkar leader of the Murree hills; of revolts at Koil (Aligarh), Badaun, Etawa; of pursuits of rebels into the mountains of Rupar near Simla on the north; of invasions and intrigues by the Timurid governor of Kabul, and by the rulers of Malwa and of Jaunpur.

"Khizr's seven years' tenure of power," writes Mr. Thomas in his *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings*, "presents but few incidents of mark; there is a seeming Oriental want of energy to sustain an accomplished triumph, an air of ease which so often stole over the senses of a successful owner of a palace in Delhi; and so his vizir and deputy, Taj-al-mulk, went forth to coerce or persuade, as occasion might dictate, the various independent chiefs, whether Moslem or Hindu, whose states now encircled the reduced boundaries of the old Pathan kingdom. There were of course the ordinary concessions to expediency, so well understood in the East, submission for the moment in the presence of a superior force, insincere professions of allegiance, temporizing payments of tribute, or desertion of fields

and strongholds easily regained; but there was clearly no advance in public security or in the supremacy of the central government. The inevitable law of nature had, no doubt, been asserting itself anew in the ready recovery of the free Hindu tribes as against the effete dominancy of the domesticated Moslems; but this process had been in continuous action from the day when the thin wedge of Mohammedanism first thrust itself amid the overwhelming population of India, whose almost Chinese attachment to ancient ideas would have resisted far more persuasive arguments than the sharpest edge of a scimitar or the most eloquent exhortations of the latest inspired preacher of Islam. Added to this normally antagonistic element there had intervened in higher quarters an amalgamative process of intermarriage with Hindu females and an admission of Hindu converts upon very easy terms to all the honours of Mohammedan nobility; so that any prestige the conquering race might once have claimed was altogether subdued if not degraded by these inconsistent concessions; and it required something more revolutionary than the accession of a local sayyid to perpetuate a new dynasty." The murder of Khizr's successor, Mubarak Shah, by his vizir, followed by the despatch of that minister whilst he was attempting to assassinate the next Sultan, led to worse anarchy and paved the way for the accession, in 1451, of the Afghan Buhlol Lodi and a new line, whose rule for a time restored somewhat of the faded splendour of Delhi.

The rest of India was split up into numerous inde-

pendent states, whose annals are for the most part unwritten or unworthy of record. Petty rulers, like Ahmad Khan of Mewat, held the land to within a dozen miles of Delhi to the south; and Darya Khan, the Lodi, matched him in his government of Sambhal on the north. There were independent chiefs in the Doab and at Biana, Hindu rajas at Kampila and Patiala and other places which had formerly owned the sovereignty of Delhi. Out of the ruck of small principalities, Hindu and Moslem, some half-dozen great dynasties stand prominently forth in Bengal, Oudh, Malwa, Gujarat, and the Deccan.

The governors of Bengal had long before attained independence and assumed the style and authority of kings; and since the days of Mohammad Taghlak there had been scarcely an attempt at interference from Delhi, beyond the futile and half-hearted campaigns of the pacific Firoz. Within its own borders, however, Bengal was often divided against itself. Rival kings ruled Eastern and Western Bengal from the two cities of Sonargaon (near Dhaka) and Satgaon (close to Hugli), until, after a long struggle, they were united to Lakhnauti under Ilyas Shah in 1352, and the provincial capital was fixed at Panduah, to which Firoz gave his own name. Firozabad remained the capital of the whole province till 1446, when the seat of government was removed again to Lakhnauti, which now received the name of Gaur, and later the epithet of Jannatabad or "Paradise-town." Very little is recorded of the annals of the numerous rulers of Bengal who governed the

province, together with part of Bihar, and latterly Jajnagar, Orissa, Tipara, Kamrup, and Chittagong, from the days of Mohammad Ghori (1202) to the conquest

GOLDEN MOSQUE AT GAUR.

by Akbar in 1576. Some were Khaljis, some were Turks; a Hindu established a brief dynasty which was converted to Islam; and at the close of the fifteenth century a series of Abyssinian kings, derived from the African body-guard imported by the eunuch Sultan

Barbak, held the throne; the latest kings were Afghans. Provincial as these sovereigns were, they maintained great state and luxury, and the remains of their architecture bear witness to the standard of taste which they upheld.

For the splendour of their architecture, however, the "Kings of the East," or Sharki Maliks of Jaunpur, stand supreme in the period before the Mogul empire. Upon the decline of the Delhi kingdom, the eunuch Sarwar, who became Khwaja-i-Jahan and vizir under the last Sultans of the house of Tag̈hlak, was sent in 1394 into "Hindustan"—the land of the Hindus, a term used specifically to denote the country about Benares and Oudh, where the Hindus were still practically independent—and took up his residence at Jaunpur, the new city founded on the Gumti opposite Zafarabad by his late master Firoz. He soon "got the fiefs of Kanauj, Karra, Oudh, Sandila, Dalamau, Bahraich, Bihar, and Tirhut into his own possession, and put down many of the infidels, and restored the forts which they had destroyed. The Almighty blessed the arms of Islam with power and victory. The raja of Jajnagar and the King of Lakhnauti now began to send to Khwaja-i-Jahan the [tributary] elephants which they had formerly sent to Delhi." Thus began the dynasty of the "Kings of the East," which subsisted in conspicuous power for nearly a century. Their dominions stretched along the plain from Kanauj to Bihar, and from the Ganges to the Himalaya Tarai, and occupied most of the country corresponding roughly with the

MINAR OF FIROZ II AT GAUR (1488).

later kingdom of Oudh between the dominions of Delhi and Bengal.

Jaunpur, the town of Jauna (Mohammad Taghlak),

supplanting the many-templed Hindu city of Ratagarh (afterwards named by the Moslems Zafarabad, "triumph-town"), was the first Mohammedan stronghold planted in the very midst of the most Hindu part of Northern India. Mahmud of Ghazni had never reached this point, but legend records the triumphant march of his nephew, the youthful and heroic Salar Mas'ud, who ravaged the land to the very gates of Benares and threw down the temples of Ratagarh. He met his death in battle with the Hindus, and dwells for ever in the reverent memory of the Moslems, who for centuries visited his grave at Bahraich, where the martyr prince is said to have appeared to the aged Sultan Firoz and warned him of his approaching end. On the site of the temple where Ramachandra slew the giant demon Kavalavira, still the scene of Hindu worship, Firoz built the fort which developed into the populous capital of the Sharki kings. Sarwar's successors, descended from his adopted sons, the children of Karanfal, a slave water-bearer of Firoz's court, not only maintained the integrity of their dominions and resisted the attacks of Ikbal Khan and the Delhi troops, but made Jaunpur a seat of learning, a refuge for men of letters in those days of confusion and strife, and an example of noble building.

Ibrahim Shah, who reigned from 1401 to 1440, was the most distinguished figure among the six "Kings of the East." He not only repelled the military and the diplomatic advances of Mahmud, the Sultan of Delhi, but even invaded the capital in 1413, during the con-

fusion which ensued upon Mahmud's death, retiring, however, when Khizr Khan appeared upon the scene. The Sayyids tried conclusions with Ibrahim in 1427, but after a well-fought battle beside the Jumna, peace was ratified by the marriage of Bibi, the daughter of Mubarak Shah, to the crown prince of Jaunpur. An

FORT OF JAUNPUR, EAST GATE.

invasion by the King of Malwa in 1435 was rewarded by the capture of Kalpi, which had been a bone of contention between the three kingdoms of Delhi, Jaunpur, and Malwa; but thenceforward to his death Ibrahim reigned in peace, an energetic and benevolent prince, beloved of his people, a zealous Moslem, and an enlightened patron of art and learning. The beautiful Atala mosque built in 1408 is his chief monument. Its

Carved Screen in the Sidi Sayid Mosque, Ahmadabad.

characteristic feature, a lofty inner gateway of simple grandeur, recalling the propylon of Egyptian temples, supplied the place of a minaret, and concealed from the quadrangle the too dominating outline of the great dome which covered the house of prayer. The graceful two-storied colonnades, five aisles deep, round the spacious quadrangle, which is broken by minor domes and

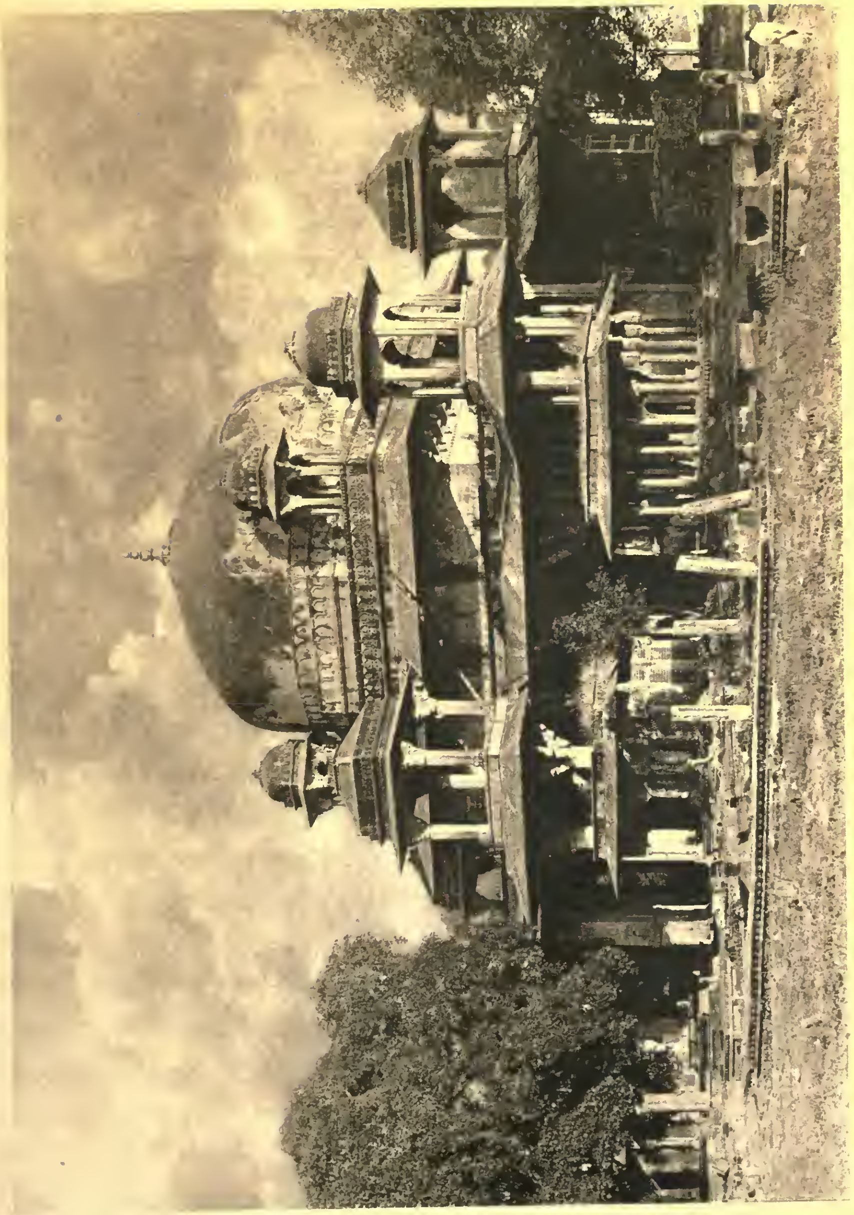
ATALA DEVI MOSQUE AT JAUNPUR.

gateways, the fine ashlar masonry of its plain buttressed exterior, the exquisite and rich, yet never intricate, floral ornament surrounding its doors and windows and prayer-niche, its geometrical trellis screens and panelled ceilings, are typical of a pure style of Saracenic art, with scarcely a trace of Indian influence. Even in such a land of precious stones of architecture, the Atala Masjid remains a gem of the first water.

Ibrahim's successor, Mahmud, whose eighteen years' reign was from time to time disturbed by the necessity or temptation to take part in the struggle then centred round the decayed power of Delhi, which he besieged in 1452, also left a monument in the mosque of the Lal Darwazah, or Ruby Gate, so called from the vermilion entrance to the palace of his wife, Bibi Raji, who built the adjacent mosque; and their son Husain completed the magnificent Jami' Masjid, or cathedral mosque, which Mahmud had begun, and of which the foundation had been laid as far back as the last years of Ibrahim. This glorious building, the sister and the rival of the Atala mosque of his grandfather, is a worthy memorial to a king whose ambition, urged by a high-spirited wife, another princess of Delhi, soared to the possession of the throne of Mohammad Taghlak, and whose campaigns extended his frontier till they embraced Etawa, Sambhal, and Badaun, made the raja of Gwalior his vassal, and spread the terror of his arms over Orissa. The new Afghan King of Delhi, Buhlol, was too strong for him in the end, and a fatal battle near Kanauj in 1477 deprived Husain of all his possessions. He was allowed to dwell for some years at the city which he and his ancestors had embellished, and then fled to Bihar, whilst his supplanter, the son of Buhlol, laid low his beautiful capital, demolished the stately palaces, destroyed the royal tombs, and was with difficulty dissuaded from razing even the mosques to the ground. The kingdom of Delhi once more touched the frontier of Bengal.

Tomb of Mohammad Ghaus at Gwalior

This mausoleum is dedicated to a saint whose memory was especially venerated in the reign of Babar and of Akbar. It is built of yellow sandstone surmounted by a dome once glazed with blue tiles, and the entire structure is a noble specimen of early Moghul architecture.



At the time when the new state of Jaunpur was about beginning to wedge itself between Delhi and Bengal, two other powerful kingdoms broke away from the central power and set up local dynasties in Malwa and Gujarat. One of Firoz Shah's great vassals, Dilawar Khan, a descendant of the Ghori kings who held the fief of Dhar among the spurs of the Vindhya range, made himself independent in 1401 during the confusion that followed Timur's invasion, and soon extended his authority over the greater part of the ancient Hindu kingdom of Malwa, which had resisted the encroachments of the Moslems up to the time of Balban, but had since been a province more or less subject to the kings of Delhi. The old capital, Ujjain, had been a famous seat of Indian learning, but the new dynasty deserted it for a new city which Hushang, the son of Dilawar, built at Mandu on a small plateau among the Vindhya slopes. The situation of Malwa, hedged in by enemies, Delhi and Jaunpur on the north and the rising power of Gujarat on the west, involved the new state in frequent wars, and its kings in turn attacked one or other of their neighbours. The murder of Dilawar's grandson, Mohammad, in 1435 by his vizir, Mahmud the Khalji, set the assassin on the throne, and Mahmud raised the kingdom of Malwa to its greatest strength. Though his siege of Delhi was unsuccessful, his campaigns against Jaunpur, the Rajputs, and the Deccan resulted in the acquisition of Kalpi on the Jumna, Ajmir and Rantambhor in Rajputana, and Elichpur south of the Satpura range. His perpetual conflicts

with the rana of Chitor, however, ended in a crushing defeat in 1440, the memory of which is still revived by the lofty Pillar of Victory which Rana Kumbho set up at his capital. After this, Rajput influence gradually became supreme in Malwa; Rana Sanga defeated the second Mahmud as effectually as Rana Kumbha had humbled the first; and Medini Rao, the lord of Chanderi, managed the kingdom as chief minister of the nominal sovereign up to the time when the invasion of India by Babar, involving the defeat of the Rajputs and the death of Medini Rao, gave to Bahadur Shah of Gujarat the opportunity to take possession of Malwa in 1531.

An extremely inaccessible position, beyond the great desert and the hills connecting the Vindhyas with the Aravali range, long preserved Gujarat from the Mohammedan yoke. Only by sea was it easily approached, and to the sea it owed its peculiar advantages, its favouring climate and fertile soil, as well as the wealth which poured in from the great commercial emporiums of Cambay, Diu, and Surat. The greater part of the Indian trade with Persia, Arabia, and the Red Sea passed through its harbours, besides a busy coasting trade. "The benefit of this trade," as Erskine truly says, "overflowed upon the country, which became a garden, and enriched the treasury of the prince. The noble mosques, colleges, palaces, and tombs, the remains of which still adorn Ahmadabad and its other cities to this day, while they excite the admiration of the traveller, prove both the wealth and the taste of the

founders." Not till the reign of Ala-ad-din at the close of the thirteenth century did it become a Moslem province, and a century later it again became independent under a dynasty of Moslem kings. Their rise resembled the birth of the Malwa state. Mohammad ibn Firoz in 1391 granted the fief of Gujarat to Zafar Khan, the son of a converted Rajput, and five years later the fiefholder assumed the royal canopy. He soon enlarged his dominions, at first but a strip between hills and sea, by the annexation of Idar to the north and Diu in Kathiawar, plundered Jhalor, and even took possession of Malwa for a short space in 1407, setting his brother on the throne in the place of Hushang, the son of Dilawar. His successor, Ahmad I, founded the fortress of Ahmadnagar, and also Ahmadabad, which has ever since been the chief city of Gujarat, and recovered Bombay and Salsette from the Deccan kings. Mahmud I not only carried on the traditional wars of his dynasty with Malwa on the east and Khandesh on the south, but kept a large fleet to subdue the pirates of the islands.

Nor were Asiatic pirates the only disturbers of his coast. The first of the three great waves of European invasion was already beating on the shores of Gujarat. Vasco da Gama had reached the Malabar ports in 1498, and the effects of the new influence were soon felt farther north. The Portuguese had no more intention at first of founding an Eastern empire than had the later Dutch and English companies. The hostility of the Moslem traders compelled them to protect their agents, and a commercial policy was necessarily supported by

military power. The position of invaders was forced upon the Portuguese, as it later was upon the English. The collision was brought about by the spirited action of the last Mamluk Sultan of Egypt. Kansuh al-Ghuri, realizing the imminent jeopardy of the great Indian trade which supplied so much of the wealth of Egypt, resolved to drive the Portuguese from the Arabian Sea. His appeal and threats to the Pope had no effect, and there remained only the resort to arms. The Mamluks had long maintained a fleet in the Red Sea, and Admiral Husain was dispatched in 1508 to Gujarat with a well-equipped war squadron, manned with sailors who had often fought with Christian fleets in the Mediterranean. He was joined by the fleet of Gujarat, commanded by the governor of Diu, in spite of the efforts of the Portuguese captain, Lourenço de Almeida, to prevent their union; and the combined fleet was in every respect superior to the flotilla of Christian merchantmen which boldly sailed out of the port of Chaul to the attack. The Portuguese were defeated in a running fight which lasted two days, and the young captain, son of the famous viceroy, was killed. His ship was surrounded on every side; his leg was broken by a cannon-ball at the commencement of the action; nevertheless he

TWO MINARS AT AHMADABAD.

had himself placed upon a chair at the foot of the mainmast, and gave his orders as coolly as ever. Shortly afterwards, a second cannon-ball struck him in the breast, and the young hero, who was not yet twenty-one, expired, in the words of Camoens, without knowing what the word surrender meant. He was avenged a few months later when, on February 2, 1509, his father, the viceroy Franciso de Almeida, utterly defeated the combined fleet of Egypt and Gujarat off Diu. In the following year the King of Gujarat offered Albuquerque, the conqueror of Goa, the port of Diu, and a Portuguese factory was there established in 1513, though the celebrated fortress of the Christian invaders was not built till 1535.

Though unable to withstand the Portuguese—or perhaps not unwilling to see his powerful deputy at Diu humiliated—Bahadur was one of the most brilliant figures among the warrior kings of Gujarat. The Rajputs of the hills and the kings of the Deccan owned his superiority, and in 1531 he annexed Malwa. A Rajput rising and the advance of the Moguls under Humayun, the son of Babar, for a time destroyed his authority, as will presently be seen, but he recovered it bravely, only to fall at last, drowned in a scuffle with the Portuguese whom he had admitted to his coast. The account of the final absorption of Gujarat into the fabric of the Mogul empire in the year 1572 belongs to a later chapter.

Nothing has been said regarding the affairs of the Deccan since the reign of Mohammad Taghlak,

after whose time no King of Delhi had ever held authority south of the Vindhyas. The rebellions which embittered the last years of that too ingenious sovereign had nowhere been more successful than in his favourite province of the south. The revolt of the "new amirs" in Sind, which hastened his end, was but a part of a larger movement, and its centre was in the Deccan. Here a brave and capable Afghan, Hasan Gangu, who had risen from menial service at Delhi to high command in the southern armies, placed himself at the head of the disaffected, and defeated the royal troops near Bidar. No attempt was made to suppress the revolt, for the king was too deeply engaged in endeavouring to restore order nearer home; and in 1347 Hasan Gangu became King of the Deccan. His dominions included almost all that the campaigns of Ala-ad-din and Mohammad Taghlak had won from the Hindu rajas of the great southern plateau. The valley of the Tapti was independent under the separate dynasty of the kings of Khandesh, an offshoot of Gujarat, who maintained their distinct though limited power at their new capital, Burhanpur, from 1370 to the conquest of Akbar in 1599. But the rest of the Deccan, from Elichpur in Berar down to the Krishna and Tungabhadra Rivers, and across from the Arabian Sea to Mahur, Ramgir, and Indore on the frontier of Warangal, was under the rule of the new dynasty of the Bahmanids, founded by Hasan Gangu. On the east the Hindu kingdom of Warangal barred his access to the Bay of Bengal; and on the south, beyond the Krishna, stretched the great

empire of Vijayanagar, the last bulwark of Hindu power in the Deccan, which, gathering together the fragments scattered by the tumultuous assaults of Mohammad Taghlak, formed a mighty state, able to parry every onslaught of the Moslems for two centuries to come.

Hasan Gangu Zafar Khan fixed his capital at Kulbarga, near the Bhima, and gave it the name of "the fairest city," Ahsanabad; and here his descendants ruled till 1526 over most of what is now called the Bombay Presidency and the Nizam's Territory. On the north, beyond an occasional dispute with Gujarat, there was little trouble; but the kingdom of Warangal or Telingana, supported by the raja of Orissa, was a standing menace to the Moslem power, though Mohammad I reduced it to tributary submission, varied by intermittent hostilities. In 1422 Ahmad Shah I invaded Warangal, captured its prince, and shot him from a catapult on the walls into a flaming wood-pile which he had prepared below. The heavy loss he suffered on his march back did not discourage him, and three years later he extinguished the native dynasty and annexed their territory; but the fact that the Hindus of Warangal ventured to retaliate in 1461, and even marched as far as Bidar, shows that the annexation soon became little more than nominal.

The power of the Bahmanid dynasty must have been overwhelming to have reduced the empire of the Carnatic to even occasional subjection. The raja of Vijayanagar ruled not only what was afterwards known as

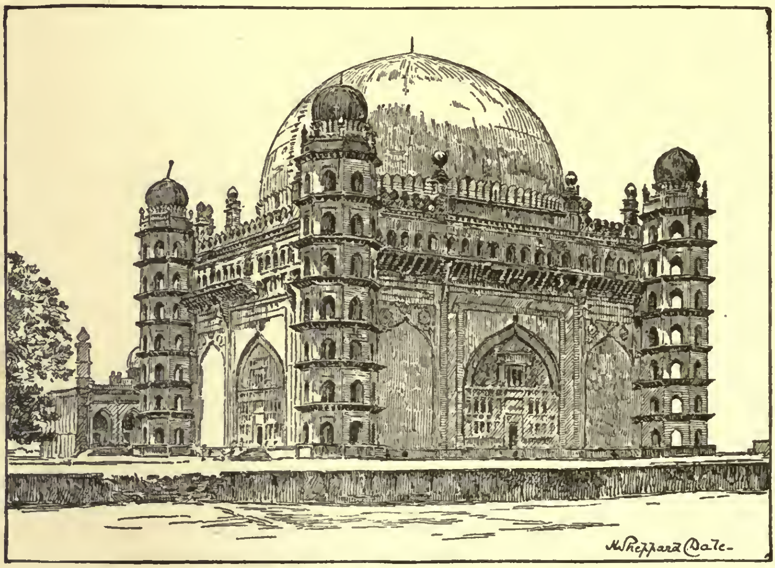
the kingdom of Mysore, but the whole country between the Krishna (or rather its tributary, the Tungabhadra) and the Kaveri, stretching from coast to coast, from Mangalore on the west to Conjevaram on the east, and from Karnal on the north to Trichinopoli on the south. Yet this great Hindu empire was repeatedly forced to pay tribute to the Bahmanids, and never succeeded in winning a victory over them. Vijayanagar coveted the triangle of land between the upper course of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra Rivers, known as the Raichur Doab, with its fortresses of Mudkal and Raichur, and the campaigns of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries centred in this territory; but the Bahmanids steadily kept their grip on it, and never permanently lost a fortress or a mile of ground. In the earliest campaign the raja led thirty thousand horse, one hundred thousand foot, and three thousand elephants to the assault of Mudkal in the debatable land, and for a brief moment in 1366 triumphed in the capture of the fortress and the massacre of the Moslems. But Mohammad I, the son of Hasan Gangu, was soon on his track. Standing on the banks of the Krishna, he vowed that he would neither eat nor sleep till he had crossed in face of the enemy and avenged his slaughtered saints. He crossed, and the raja fled, abandoning his camp and seventy thousand men, women, and children, on whom the Sultan wreaked his vengeance without mercy. The Bahmanid kings had no bowels of compassion, and it is related of one of them that whenever the number of Hindus massacred at one time reached

the number of twenty thousand, it was his habit to indulge in a feast.

Mohammad continued his march to Adoni, and even to the capital Vijayanagar itself, which he vainly besieged for a month. This campaign, in which he repeatedly vanquished the enemy, and laid the Carnatic waste, is said to have cost the lives of half a million Hindus, and it was only after ambassadors had urgently pleaded with him, that the Sultan consented to forego his custom of indiscriminate slaughter and pledged his successors, somewhat ineffectually, to the like clemency. Another campaign, waged by his son, Mujahid, in 1378, was undertaken for the possession of the strong fortress of Bankipur, south of Dharwar, and after several victories and hunting the raja from place to place, and after restoring the mosque on the seacoast which Kafur had founded nearly seventy years before, Mujahid led his army back to the Krishna with over sixty thousand prisoners, chiefly women. He was murdered on his way home by his uncle Davud, but the change of rulers made no difference in the superiority of the Moslem kingdom. Vijayanagar paid an annual tribute, or if it withheld it there was war and humiliation.

The most signal discomfitures of the Hindus occurred in the reign of Firoz, the son of Davud. On the first occasion, in 1398, Vijayanagar was the aggressor, the object being, as usual, the regaining of Mudkal and Raichur. Firishta tells a quaint story of how a grave kadi and his friends insinuated themselves into the not very fastidious favour of the nautch girls of

the enemy's camp, and disguised as dancing women contrived to get themselves smuggled into the presence of the raja's son, whom they diverted with a sword-dance which ended in the plunging of their daggers into the prince's breast. This catastrophe, followed up by a night attack, caused the flight of the raja, and Vija-



SULTAN MAHMUD'S TOMB AT BIJAPUR.

yanagar had to pay a sum equivalent to £400,000 to get the enemy over the border. In 1406, as the annual tribute had not been rendered, Firoz again invaded the Carnatic. The war was provoked by the raja, who, hearing of a lovely but coy maiden in Mudkal, marched upon the fortress to secure her, but instead of succeeding in his amorous quest, not only found the maiden fled, but learnt that the army of Kulbarga was on his track.

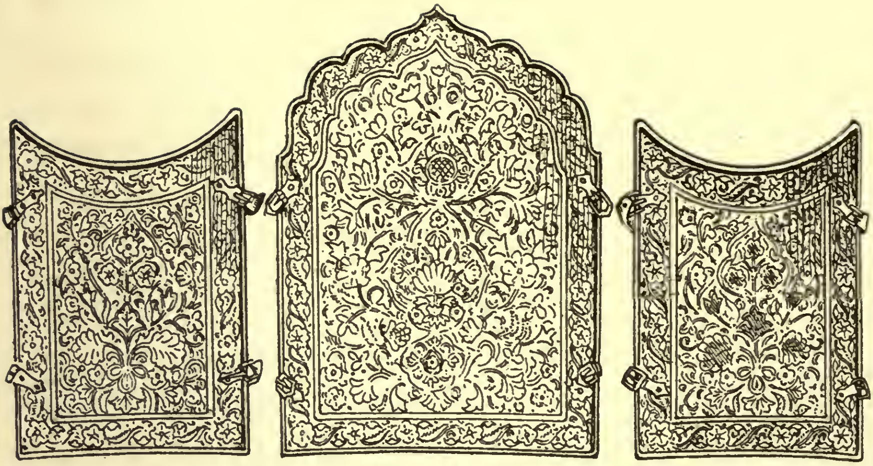
Firoz took Bankipur, which his predecessor had vainly coveted, and did not retire till the enemy had again suffered the loss of sixty thousand prisoners. Not only did the raja surrender the fortress; he even yielded a princess to the Sultan's harem—a humiliating degradation for a Hindu sovereign—together with immense treasure, and was actually obliged to admit his foe as a guest within the walls of the capital. An interesting feature of the Bahmanid wars was the adoption of the "Rumi" (Ottoman) custom of forming a laager of linked wagons to protect the camp. As we shall see, Babar employed this mode of defence with the addition of chained gun-carriages. Other campaigns followed in 1419, 1423, 1435, and 1443, accompanied by the usual Bahmanid victories and massacres, the destruction of temples and Brahman colleges and general devastation, and ending in the invariable submission and tribute of the Hindu state.

The unsuccessful siege of Devarakanda in the Telugu country in 1459 by the Bahmanid Humayun, an Oriental Nero, shows that the power of the dynasty was limited by Hindu chiefs to the east; but the conquests of Mohammad II between 1476 and 1481, when Rajamandari, Kandapali, and Kandavid were wrested from the raja of Orissa, while the Sultan's arms triumphed over Masulipatan, and Belgaon was added on the west, raised the kingdom of Kulgarga to its greatest glory and extent. The pride was very shortly followed by the fall, but the blow did not come from rival empires. The kingdom broke up from internal causes. The succession of two

young sons of Humayun under a regency weakened the royal authority, and though the wise administration of a great minister, Mahmud Gavan, and a decade of vigorous campaigns of aggression secured a vast extension of territory and an unprecedented degree of prosperity, yet the unjust execution of the minister, and the subsequent demoralization of king and state, led to the disruption of an empire that had outgrown its cohesion. A recent division into large provincial governments hastened the dissolution. During the reign of Mohammad's youthful son, Mahmud Shah II, the various provinces shook off the parent's yoke. Imad-al-mulk was crowned king in Berar in 1484; Yusuf Adil Shah proclaimed the independence of the newly created government of Bijapur in 1489; Nizam-al-mulk prepared the way for the separation of Junair. Thus the most important provinces in the north, west, and southwest were lost; and in 1512 Telingana, never very firmly held, followed the rest and declared its independence. Mahmud Shah, once a captive, next a refugee, died at Bidar, which had for some time superseded Kulbarga as the dynastic capital, in 1518, and with him the power of the Bahmanids came to an end, though three sons and a grandson mounted a nominal throne during the next eight years.

Their dominions were divided among the Adil Shahs of Bijapur (1489-1686), the Kutb Shahs of Golkonda (1512-1687), the Barid Shahs of Bidar (1492- c. 1609), the Nizam Shahs of Ahmadnagar (1490-1595), and the Imad Shahs of Berar (1484-1572). Of these dynasties

we shall hear again when we come to the Deccan wars of Aurangzib. It is now time to turn to a new invasion of India from the northwest, which gradually converted a country divided among numerous petty dynasties into a united and powerful empire, and founded the long line of the great Moghuls which endured to the days of the Mutiny.



INDIAN ARMOUR.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COMING OF THE MOGHULS[1]

THE EMPEROR BABAR

1451-1530 A.D.

THE Moslems of India had grown effete. The old hardy vigour which had enabled the hillmen to trample upon the rich and ancient civilization of the Hindus was extinct. A race of conquerors had become a squabbling crowd, jostling each other for the luxuries

[1] Moghul — more accurately Mughal — is the Arabic spelling of Mongol, and is specially applied to the emperors of India descended from Babar and sometimes called in Europe the Babarids. They were however of mixed race; Babar himself was a Turk on his father's side, though a Mongol on his mother's, and he abhorred the very name of Moghul. His descendants introduced a strong Rajput strain by their marriages with Hindu princesses. The term Moghul is also applied to the followers of the Moghul emperors, and came to mean any fair man from Central Asia or Afghanistan, as distinguished from the darker native Indians. The various foreign invaders, or governing Moslem class, Turks, Afghans, Pathans, and Moghuls, eventually became so mixed that all were indifferently termed Moghuls.

of thrones, but wanting the power to hold a sceptre. The respect which belonged to a caste of foreigners, who kept themselves apart and observed strict rules of religious and social law, had been degraded when those laws were lightly esteemed, when the harems of the Moslems were filled with native women, when Hindus who nominally professed Islam were promoted to high office, when the Mohammedan domination, in short, had become the rule of the half-caste. The empire of Delhi had disappeared. The greater provinces had their separate kings, the smaller districts and even single cities and forts belonged to chiefs, or to clans who owned no higher lord. The king's writ was no more supreme; it was the day of the little princes, the Muluk-at-tawaif, or Faction Kings.

Something, it is true, had been done to restore the vanished power of Delhi during the century that followed the collapse of the Taghlak dynasty after the invasion of Timur. The Sayyids utterly failed, but their successors, the Lodi Afghans, showed at first both energy and wisdom. Buhlol, who supplanted the last of the feeble Sayyids in 1451, was a good soldier and a simple man, who was content to let the world know that he was king, without parading the pomp of monarchy. He took the minor principalities round Delhi in hand, and after a stubborn war of over a quarter of a century succeeded (as we have seen) in recovering Jaunpur and its territories, and in restoring the old frontier of his kingdom as far as Bihar. His son Sikandar, succeeding him in 1488, completed his task by

subduing Bihar, where Husain, the last King of Jaunpur, had taken refuge, and by a treaty of alliance with the King of Bengal it was arranged that the dominion of Delhi should bound that of Bengal, as in former times. The Rajputs of Dholpur, Chanderi, and Gwalior submitted; and Sikandar's kingdom, including the Panjab, the Doab, Jaunpur, Oudh, Bihar, Tirhut, and the country between the Sutlaj and Bandelkhand, began to recall the earlier supremacy of Delhi.

The resemblance was only on the surface, however, and, as Erskine has pointed out in his judicious history, "these extensive possessions, though under one king, had no very strong principle of cohesion. The monarchy was a congeries of nearly independent principalities, jagirs, and provinces, each ruled by a hereditary chief, or by a zamindar or delegate from Delhi; and the inhabitants looked more to their immediate governors, who had absolute power in the province and in whose hands consequently lay their happiness or misery, than to a distant and little known sovereign. It was the individual, not the law, that reigned. The Lodi princes, not merely to strengthen their own power, but from necessity, had in general committed the government of the provinces and the chief offices of trust to their own countrymen, the Afghans; so that men of the Lodi, Fermuli, and Lohani tribes held all the principal jagirs; which from the habitual modes of thinking of their race they considered as their own of right and purchased by their swords rather than as due to any bounty or liberality on the part of the sovereign."

A throne depending on the allegiance of "an aristocracy of rapacious and turbulent chiefs" demands politic concessions on the part of the monarch. Afghans above most men resent an undue assumption of superiority, and tolerate with difficulty the tedious etiquette and obsequious ceremony of a formal court. Their king must be their chief, a *bon camarade* and admitted leader in arms, but he must not give himself airs, or show a want of respect for the free and outspoken clansmen upon whose swords his dominion rests. Unfortunately, the new Sultan of Delhi, Ibrahim, son of Sikandar, who succeeded his father in 1518, was a man of forms and a stickler for royal prerogative. He made the great Afghan chiefs stand motionless in his presence with folded hands and vexed them with petty rules of etiquette. Dreading their power—already displayed in the support given by an influential faction to his brother Jalal, who had been nominated to the government of Jaunpur and had made a rash and unsuccessful effort to share a divided crown—he sought, instead of attempting to disarm them by favour and concession, to reduce them to a sense of their inferiority by treating his lower subjects with the same degree of consideration that he showed to the Afghan nobles. When discontent arose, and revolt after revolt sprang up, he endeavoured to quench the rising conflagration by the blood of some of the leading amirs.

The result was still wider disaffection. The eastern districts about Oudh, Jaunpur, and Bihar, where Afghan influence was especially strong, rose in arms and

chose Darya Khan, of the Lohani tribe, as their chief. In the Panjab, Daulat Khan, a son of one of the half-dozen Afghan nobles who had set the Lodi dynasty on the throne of Delhi seventy years before, rebelled in alarm at the execution of some of the leading chiefs. The rule of Sultan Ibrahim had become intolerable, even to his own nation, and his uncle, Ala-addin, fled to Kabul to solicit the aid of its king, the descendant of Timur, in wresting the crown of Delhi from its ill-advised possessor.

BEHAR TYPE.

The King of Kabul was not the man to shrink from an adventure of any kind; the wilder and the more daring it seemed, the better he liked it. Babar is one of the most captivating personalities in Oriental history, and the fact that he is able to impart this charm to his own Memoirs is not the least of his titles to fame. He is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and imperial government, be-

tween Timur and Akbar. The blood of the two great scourges of Asia, Mongol and Turk, Chingiz and Timur, mingled in his veins, and to the daring and restlessness of the nomad Tartar he joined the culture and urbanity of the Persian. He brought the energy of the Mongol and the courage and capacity of the Turk to the subjection of the listless Hindu; and, himself a soldier of fortune and no architect of empire, he laid the first stone of the splendid fabric which his grandson Akbar completed.

His connection with India began only in the last twelve years of his life. His youth was spent in ineffectual struggles to preserve his sovereignty in his native land. His early manhood, passed in his new kingdom of Kabul, was full of an unsatisfied yearning for the recovery of his mother country. It was not till the age of thirty-six that he abandoned his hope of a restored empire on the Oxus and Jaxartes, and turned his eyes resolutely towards the cities and spoils of Hindustan. Five times he invaded the northern plains, and the fifth invasion was a conquest. Five years he dwelt in the India he had now made his own, and in his forty-eighth year he died.

His permanent place in history rests upon his Indian conquests, which opened the way for an imperial line; but his place in biography and in literature is determined rather by his daring adventures and persevering efforts in his earlier days, and by the delightful Memoirs in which he related them. Soldier of fortune as he was, Babar was none the less a man of fine literary taste

and fastidious critical perception. In Persian, the language of culture, the Latin of Central Asia, as it is of India, he was an accomplished poet, and in his native Turkish he was master of a pure and unaffected style alike in prose and verse. The Turkish princes of his time prided themselves upon their literary polish, and to turn an elegant *ghazal*, or even to write a beautiful manuscript, was their peculiar ambition, no less worthy or stimulating than to be master of sword or mace. Wit and learning, the art of improvising a quatrain on the spot, quoting the Persian classics, writing a good hand, or singing a good song, were highly appreciated in Babar's world, as much perhaps as valour, and infinitely more than virtue. Babar himself often breaks off in the midst of a tragic story to quote a verse, and he found leisure in the thick of his difficulties and dangers to compose an ode on his misfortunes. His battles as well as his orgies were humanized by a breath of poetry.

Hence his Memoirs are no rough soldier's chronicle of marches and countermarches, " saps, mines, blinds, gabions, palisadoes, ravelins, half-moons, and such trumpery "; they contain the personal impressions and acute reflections of a cultivated man of the world, well read in Eastern literature, a close and curious observer, quick in perception, a discerning judge of persons, and a devoted lover of nature—one, moreover, who was well able to express his thoughts and observations in clear and vigorous language. The man's own character is so fresh and buoyant, so free from convention and cant,

so rich in hope, courage, and resolve, and at the same time so warm and friendly, so very human, that it conquers one's admiring sympathy. The utter frankness and self-revelation, the unconscious portraiture of all his virtues and follies, his obvious truthfulness and fine sense of honour give the Memoirs of this prince of autobiographers an authority which is equal to their charm.

The line of emperors descended from Babar is no more. The very name of Mongol has lost its influence on the banks of Jaxartes; the Turk is the servant of the Russian he once despised. The last Indian sovereign of Timur's race ended his inglorious career an exile at Rangoon almost within our own memory; a few years later the degenerate descendants of Chingiz Khan submitted to the officers of the Czar. The power and pomp of Babar's dynasty are gone; the record of his life—the *littera scripta* that mocks at time—remains unaltered and imperishable.

Babar's earlier career must be read elsewhere: it began far away from India, in the country beyond the Oxus, where the descendants of Timur struggled for the remaining fragment of the vast empire which had broken up as soon as his iron hand was set in death. Timur's conquests were too recent and too hasty to be organized into settled empire. They were like a vast conflagration driven before the wind, which destroys the herbage for awhile, but when the flame has passed the earth grows green again. Even in his original home, the Oxus land, a single century saw the downfall of Timur's dynasty: the fire had only left some embers,

which smouldered awhile, but, lacking the kindling and stirring of the great incendiary, finally died out. After that, the sole relic of Timur's vast dominions was the

THE EMPEROR BABAR.

little kingdom which an exiled prince of his own brave blood set up among the crags and passes of the Afghan hills—whence came the great Moghuls and the glories of Delhi and Agra.

It was among these embers of the great fire that Babar, in 1494, at the age of eleven, found himself suddenly king of the province of Farghana beside the Jaxartes, by right of inheritance in the sixth generation from Timur. No boy had ever to face such perilous paths as those which led the young King of Farghana to the heights of his soaring ambition. He would reign where Timur reigned at Samarkand, and there hold sway over the empire of his ancestor: nothing less would content him. But the road to empire lay through jealous kinsmen, treacherous chiefs, mutinous retainers, and the ever-growing power of the hostile Uzbeg tribes. Twice did Babar seat himself upon Timur's throne, and twice was he expelled to wander a homeless exile among the hills, dwelling in the shepherds' huts, or suffering the ungracious protection of his mother's Mongol relations in the northern steppes. Ten years of ceaseless effort, brief triumph, sore defeat, and grinding misery, all borne with that courage and sanguine hope that were among his finest qualities, ended in his retreat to Kabul, where he took the little throne which had been held by Timur's lineage ever since his raid into India. Here Babar made himself a kingdom, small compared with the dominion of the present amir of Afghanistan, but not easy to hold, with its turbulent and jealous tribes and rocky barriers.

But a mountain chiefship was no fit ambition for a king who had twice ruled Samarkand. Babar's dreams still reverted to the land of his forefathers, and only the disastrous failure of his third attempt to

recover Timur's capital in 1512 convinced him that the true road to empire led down the passes into the rich plains of Hindustan. His thoughts had often turned toward the east whilst he was bringing into order the restless tribes of his mountain realm, and several times his expeditions led him very near the Indian frontier; but he had been twenty years at Kabul before he carried his thoughts into decisive action and began his campaign of conquest. An attack in 1519 on Bajaur, in the Indian borderland near Chitral, was merely a preliminary step, though followed by the occupation of Bhira on the Jihlam. Babar had thus set foot upon the Panjab, and claimed it in right of his ancestor Timur's conquest a hundred and twenty years before; but it was no more than a claim, for the moment he turned back to Kabul the Indians recovered the territory, and Babar's occupation, with a couple of thousand horse, was but a raid. It was not till 1524 that he entered resolutely upon the campaigns which ended in the conquest of Hindustan.

The appeal of Alam Khan Ala-ad-din, the uncle of Sultan Ibrahim, was but the spark that kindled a long-prepared train. The claimant to the throne of Delhi appeared at Kabul to urge a petition that was already granted in Babar's own mind. No more propitious moment could be desired. India was seething with faction and discontent. Babar was strong and prepared, and at his side was a member of the Lodi family to sanction his plans and invite adhesion. The emperor was soon on the march, and following his previous route to Bhira was quickly in the neighbourhood of Lahore.

Street Scene in Lahore.
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The insurgent governor, Daulat Khan, had already been driven out by the Delhi army, but he was amply avenged by the Kabul troops, who routed the enemy with heavy slaughter and drove them through the streets of Lahore, plundering and burning the bazar. Babar rested only four days in the capital of the Panjab, and then pressed on at his best speed to Dipalpur, where he stormed and sacked the town, and massacred the garrison. He appointed some of his most trusty officers to defend the province, and having established "Sultan" Ala-ad-din at Dipalpur (with a veteran Mongol to watch him), the emperor returned to Kabul to beat up reinforcements.

Babar set out on his final invasion of India in November, 1525. His eldest son, Humayun, brought a contingent from Badakhshan, and Khwaja Kalan, trustiest of generals, led the troops of Ghazni. Daulat Khan, after deceiving the invaders with pretended support, was now in the field against them at the head of forty thousand men, and the old Afghan had girded on two swords in token of his resolve to win or die. Nevertheless, this valiant army broke and vanished at Babar's approach with a far less numerous force, and the emperor continued his advance.

The decisive battle was fought on April 21, 1526, on the plain of Panipat—the historic site where the throne of India has thrice been won. For several days Babar was busy with his preparations. Following the Osmanli order of battle, as he himself says, he collected seven hundred gun-carts, and formed a laager by linking

them together with twisted bull-hides, to break a cavalry charge, and by arranging hurdles or shields between each pair to protect the matchlock men. Then two marches more brought the army to Panipat. Here he had the town on his right, his left was defended by ditches and abatis of trees, while he placed his cannon and matchlocks in the centre. He was careful to leave gaps in his line a bowshot apart, through which one hundred or 150 men could charge abreast.

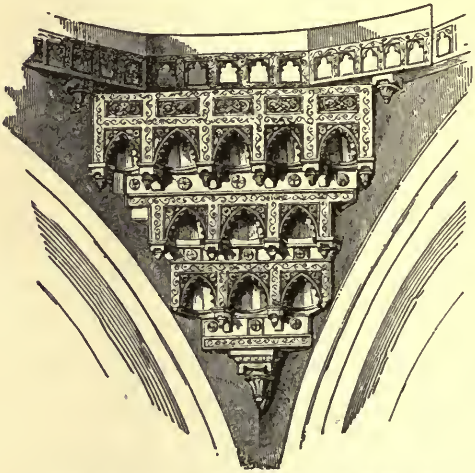
On the 20th of April a night surprise was attempted upon the Afghans' position, and though it failed, owing to the confusion of the troops in the darkness, it had the effect of drawing the enemy out of his camp. Sultan Ibrahim, elated by the ease with which this attack had been driven back, brought his army out at dawn on the 21st in battle array. It was said to muster one hundred thousand men and one hundred elephants. The moment Babar detected the movement of the enemy, his men were ordered to put on their helmets and mail, and take their stations. His army was drawn up behind his laager in the usual order, right and left centre, right and left wing, advance-guard, and reserve; but in addition he had placed flanking parties of Mongols on the extreme right and left, with orders to execute their famous national manœuvre, the *tulughma*—a rapid wheel charging the enemy's rear—of which Babar well knew the tremendous effect.

The army of Delhi came straight on, at a quick march, without a halt from the start. They seemed to be aiming at Babar's right, and he sent up the re-

serve to its support. As the enemy came up to the ditches, abatis, and hurdles, they hesitated, and the pressure of the troops behind threw them into some confusion. Taking advantage of this, Babar sent out his Mongol flankers through the gaps in the laager, and they galloped round the enemy and poured their arrows into the rear. Part of the emperor's left wing, advancing incautiously, got into difficulties; but the general's eye was on them, and they were promptly supported from the centre. Meanwhile the right was also hard pressed, and Babar sent forward his right centre to their assistance. The master-gunner, Ustad Ali, made pretty practice with his European pieces, in front of the line, and was admirably seconded by Mustafa, the cannoneer on the left centre. The enemy was now engaged on all sides, front, flanks, and rear; and their charges, which seemed but puny to men who had stood up to the Mongols' swoop, were easily repulsed and driven back upon their centre, which was already too crowded to be able to use its strength. In this jammed confusion they lay at the mercy of the hardy Turks and Mongols, who fell upon the strangled ranks with deadly effect.

By noon the great army of the King of Delhi was broken and flying for dear life. Sultan Ibrahim himself lay stark on the field, amid some fifteen thousand of his dead. They brought his head to Babar, and prisoners, elephants, and spoil of all sorts began to come in from the pursuers. "The sun had mounted spear-high when the onset began, and the battle lasted

till mid-day, when the enemy were completely broken and routed, and my people victorious and triumphant. By the grace and mercy of Almighty God this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army, in the space of half a day, was laid in the dust." Two detachments were at once despatched to occupy Delhi and Agra, and on Friday, April 27th, the public prayer was said in the mosque of the capital in the name of the new emperor, the first of the "Great Moguls."



ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL OF THE MOSQUE AT OLD DELHI.

The spoil of the royal treasuries at Delhi and Agra was immense, and the first business was to divide the booty among the expectant troops. To his eldest son Humayun, who had played his part like a man in the great battle, he gave seventy lacs (of dams, equivalent to about £20,000) and a treasure which no one had counted. His chief Begs were rewarded with six to ten lacs apiece (£1,700 to £2,800). Every man who had fought received his share, and even the traders and camp-followers were remembered in the general bounty. Every man and woman, slave and free, young and old, in Kabul, was sent a silver coin in celebration of the

victory. When Humayun brought his father the glorious diamond, one of the famous historical jewels, valued at "half the daily expenses of the world," which is perhaps, to be identified with the renowned Koh-i-nur, and which the family of the late Raja Vikramajit had given him in gratitude for his chivalrous protection, Babar returned it to the young prince. He had no love for wealth or precious stones, except to give away, and his prodigal generosity in distributing the immense spoil of the Delhi kings gained him the nickname of "the Kalandari"—the mendicant friar. He was content with fame.

Babar was now King of Delhi, but not yet sovereign of Hindustan, much less of India. Even of the dominions of Delhi, which then stretched from the Indus to Bihar, and from Gwalior almost to the Himalayas, he was only nominally master. The Lodi dynasty, indeed, was dethroned, and its king slain, but that king left a brother to claim the crown, and the land remained unsubdued east and south of Agra. The people were hostile to the strangers of uncouth tongue, and each town and petty ruler prepared for obstinate resistance. The strongholds of the Doab and Rajputana were all fortifying against attack, unanimous in rejecting the newcomers. In spite of the surfeit of treasure, Babar's troops were likely to starve. "When I came to Agra," he says, "it was the hot season. All the inhabitants fled from terror, so that we could find neither grain for ourselves nor fodder for our beasts. The villages, out of mere hatred and spite to us, had taken to anar-

chy, thieving, and marauding. The roads became impassable. I had not had time, after the division of the treasure, to send fit persons to occupy and protect the different district-subdivisions and stations. The heats this year chanced to be unusually oppressive, and many men dropped at about the same time, as though struck by the simoom, and died on the spot."

The troops began to murmur. They longed for the cool air of Kabul, and even made ready to return. They looked upon India as a buccaneer looked on a gallion: the prize-money secured, they wished to make sail. They had to deal with an obstinate man, however, and Babar summoned the chief officers together and made them a speech. He recalled their past toil and labours together, the weary marches and grievous hardships, and reminded them that all these had been endured for the sake of the great reward which was now theirs. "A mighty enemy has been overcome, and a rich and powerful kingdom is at our feet. And now, having attained our goal and won our game, are we to turn back from all we have accomplished, and fly to Kabul like men who have lost and are discomfited? Let no man who calls himself my friend ever again moot such a thing. But if there be any one of you who cannot bring himself to stay, then let him go." Thoroughly ashamed, the murmurers dared not say a word. There are few acts more splendidly heroic in Babar's career than this bold resolve to stay where he was, in the middle of India, among hostile nations and a discontented soldiery, and the reward of his firmness soon

appeared. Not only his own people, but many of his enemies were won over. First an Afghan officer came with a valuable contingent of two or three thousand retainers from the Doab. Then a powerful chief was won by the emperor's clemency to his captured sons. Meanwhile Sambhal was taken by guile; and Humayun led an army against the insurgent Afghans in the east, who were advancing into the Doab, but immediately broke up on his approach and fled over the Ganges. The young prince pursued, took Jaunpur and Ghazipur, and leaving strong divisions to hold his conquests, marched back by way of Kalpi to support his father against a pressing danger.

For Babar was now coming to the grip with the only formidable rival left in Hindustan. The great Rana Sanga of Chitor, the revered head of all the Rajput princes, commanded a vast army. One hundred and twenty chieftains of rank, with eighty thousand horse and 500 war elephants, followed him to the field. The lords of Marwar and Amber, Gwalior, Ajmir, Chanderi, and many more, brought their retainers to his standards; and the battered old Rajput hero, who counted eighty wounds in his body, and had lost an arm and an eye in the wars, was not to be denied when his drums beat to battle. The famous Rana was now marching on Biana. The emperor sent on a light detachment toward the threatened fortress, with orders to hang on the enemy and harass him; and himself set out with his main body in battle array on February 11, 1527. All his campaigns hitherto had been against fel-

low Moslems; now, for the first time, he was marching against " heathens; " it was the Jihad, the Holy War. Moreover, these " heathens " were fighting men of the first class. Babar had some experience of the warlike capacities of various races. He knew the Mongol wheeling swoop, the Uzbeg charge, the Afghan skirmish, and

RAJPUT SOLDIERS.

the steady fighting of his own Turks; but he was now to meet warriors of a higher type than any he had encountered. The Rajputs, energetic, chivalrous, fond of battle and bloodshed, and animated by a strong national spirit, were ready to meet face to face the boldest veterans of the camp, and were at all times prepared to lay down their life for their honour.

The emperor camped at Sikri—afterwards Akbar's

exquisite palace-city of Fathpur—where he was joined by the garrison from Biana. These men had already received a lesson from the Rajputs, of whose bravery and daring they spoke with deep respect. The enemy was evidently not one that could be trifled with. An outpost affair soon confirmed this impression: an incautious advance by one of the amirs was instantly detected by the Rajputs, who sent the Turks flying back to camp. Being now in touch with the enemy, the emperor put his army in battle array. As before at Panipat, he ranged the gun-carriages, and probably the baggage-wagons, so as to cover his front, and chained them together at a distance of five paces. Mustafa from Turkey ordered his artillery admirably in the Ottoman manner on the left wing, but Ustad Ali had a method of his own; where there were no guns or wagons, a ditch was dug, backed by portable wooden tripods on wheels, lashed together at a few paces apart. These preparations took twenty-five days, and were designed to restore the confidence of the troops, who were almost in a panic at the reports of the numbers and courage of the Rajputs and at the foolish predictions of a rascally astrologer.

It was at this crisis that Babar renounced wine, broke his drinking-cups, poured out the stores of liquor on the ground, and calling his dispirited officers together, addressed them: "Gentlemen and Soldiers:—Every man that comes into the world must pass away: God alone is immortal and unchangeable. Whoso sits down to the feast of life must end by drinking the cup

of death. All visitors to the inn of mortality must one day leave this house of sorrow. Rather let us die with honour than live disgraced.

> "'With fame, though I die, I am content,
> Let fame be mine, though life be spent.'

God most high has been gracious in giving us this destiny, that if we fall, we die martyrs; if we conquer, we triumph in His holy cause. Let us swear with one accord by the great name of God that we will never turn back from such a death, or shrink from the stress of battle, till our souls are parted from our bodies."

The response was enthusiastic. Every man seized the Koran and took the oath, and the army began to pluck up heart. Babar resolved to advance upon the enemy. On New Year's Day, March 12, he writes:— "I advanced my wagons [and guns] and tripods with all the apparatus and machines that I had prepared, and marched forward with my army in order of battle —right wing, left wing, and centre in their places. In front were the wagons, gun-carriages, and tripods on wheels, and behind came Ustad Ali Kuli with a body of his matchlockmen, to prevent the communication being cut off between the artillery and the infantry behind, and to enable them to advance and form into line. When the ranks were formed and every man in his place, I galloped along the line, encouraging the begs and men of the centre, right, and left, giving special directions to each division how to act, and to each

man orders how to proceed and engage. Then, when all was arranged, I moved the army on in order of battle for a couple of miles, when we camped." On Saturday, March 16, 1527, the two armies met at Kanwaha. The battle began by a desperate charge of the Rajputs upon the emperor's right, which he instantly supported from his reserves, while opening fire with his artillery from the centre. It was impossible to stop a Rajput charge, however; they came on, wave after wave, against the cannon, and the fight grew more and more desperate. After several hours of hand-to-hand conflict, Babar sent orders to his flanking columns to wheel and charge in the famous Mongol tactics, while at the same time he ordered his guns forward, and sent out the household troops at the gallop on each side of his centre of matchlockmen, who also advanced firing. This combined manœuvre shook the enemy. Few Indians will fight when taken in the rear. The Rajputs were pressed into a disordered crowd, and nothing but their indomitable gallantry prolonged a battle that was fast becoming a massacre. Ustad Ali's cannon did fearful execution, and at last the splendid chivalry of India gave up hope, forced its way through the encompassing Turks, and fled in every direction, leaving heaps of slain upon the fields. Many chiefs had fallen, and the heads of the noble Rajputs rose in a ghastly tower erected by their conqueror. Sanga escaped, severely wounded, and died soon after, but no raja of his line ever again took the field in person against an emperor of Babar's house.

Within a year the invader had struck two decisive blows which shattered the power of two great forces. At Panipat the Mohammedan Afghans went down; Kanwaha crushed the confederacy of the bravest Hindus. The storming of the fortress of Chanderi, the stronghold of Medini Rao, the great Rajput vizir of Malwa, completed the overthrow. When the upper fort was carried, the desperate garrison killed their women and children, and rushing forth naked threw themselves upon the Moslem swords, and such as came through leaped over the ramparts to certain death. There was no more trouble with the Rajputs.

It was otherwise with the Afghans. Beaten at Delhi, they were still strong in Bihar, and had even resumed the offensive when they saw the emperor absorbed in the Rajput campaign. But their time of retribution was at hand, and as soon as Chanderi had fallen, Babar set out in February, 1528, to reduce the eastern province. The Afghans fell back from Kanauj at his approach, and awaited him on the farther bank of the Ganges. Babar set up his camp opposite and ordered a pontoon to be thrown across the sealike stream. The Afghans mocked at so wild a project, but the bridge went on; and the skilful fire of the matchlocks and artillery, discharged from an island and from a battery on the bank, protected the engineers who were constructing the pontoon. Ustad Ali even succeeded in firing off the great cannon called Dig Ghazi ("victorious gun," a title it had won in the battle of Kanwaha) no less than sixteen times a day, which was clearly a record performance

The Gigantic Howitzer "Malik-i Maidan"

This huge gun, called Malik-i Maidan, or "King of the Field," was cast by Mohammad Rumi at Ahmadnagar in the year 1548, and was for its time a remarkable piece of artillery.

at that time. On March 13 the bridge was finished, and some of the infantry and the Panjab troops were sent over to skirmish. On the three following days the artillery and the whole of the imperial forces crossed in safety, and the enemy, after stubbornly fighting, decamped. They were hotly pursued nearly to Oudh, with the loss of their families and baggage, and many were overtaken and slain. The Afghan army was utterly dispersed for the time, and Babar returned to Agra for the rainy season.

The city was a very different place from the Agra he had found. He delighted in running water, and had sunk wells and built tanks among the tamarinds beside the Jumna, and planted roses and narcissuses in regular parterres. In India a "garden" includes a dwelling, and Babar's Charbagh with its marble pavilions and beds of roses must have been a delightful palace. The Indians, who had never seen this sort of pleasure-ground, called it "Kabul."

He was not left long in repose. The Afghans in Bihar were not yet quelled. Mahmud Lodi, the brother of Sultan Ibrahim, had arrived among them, and they flocked to the standard of their hereditary king. Jaunpur and most of Bihar declared for him, and the many factions laid aside their rivalries for the moment to support the last chance of an Afghan restoration. Babar received this news in the middle of January, 1529, while he was staying at Dholpur, preparing for a predatory campaign in Sind. He at once returned to Agra and led his army out. At the news of his approach the large

army of the Afghans, numbering, it was said, a hundred thousand men, melted away: the Lodi pretender fled from before Chunar, to which he was laying siege; Sher Khan escaped from Benares; and as Babar pressed on to Baxar, several of the Afghan leaders came in to offer their submission, and their prince, finding himself almost deserted, sought protection with the Bengal army.

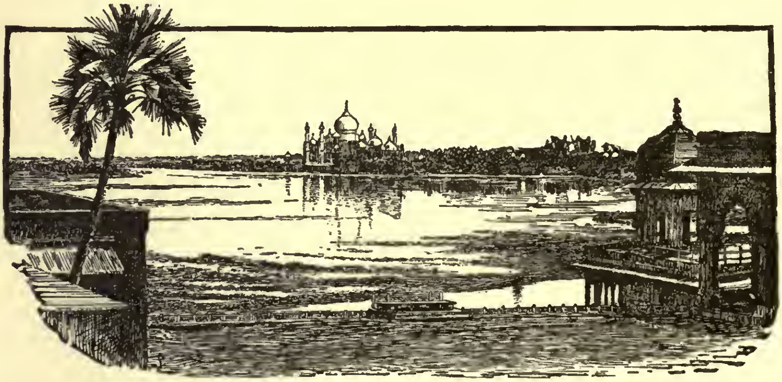
The kingdom of Bengal, as we have seen, had long been independent of Delhi, and Babar had no immediate intention of subduing it, so long as it did not interfere with him. But the protection it was affording to the rebels was not the act of a friendly power, and the massing of the Bengal troops on the frontier was ominous. Reinforced by twenty thousand men from Jaunpur, Babar resolved to force the passage of the Gogra in face of the Bengalis. He made unusually elaborate preparations, for he knew the enemy were skilful gunners and were in great force. Ustad Ali was to plant his cannon, European pieces, and swivels on a rising ground at the point between the two rivers, and was also to keep up a hot fire from his matchlockmen upon the Bengali camp on the east bank of the Gogra. A little below the junction of the rivers, Mustafa was to direct a cannonade from his artillery, supported by matchlocks, on the enemy's flank, and on the Bengal flotilla which lay off an island. The main army was formed in six divisions, four of which, under the emperor's son Askari, were already north of the Ganges. These were to cross the Gogra by boats or fords and

keep the enemy busy while the artillery was being carried across, and a strong force was sent ahead to divert attention. The fifth division, under Babar himself, was to support Ustad Ali's batteries above the confluence, and then to cross the Gogra under cover of the guns; while the sixth went to the support of Mustafa's artillery on the right bank of the Ganges.

On Sunday and Monday, May 2 and 3, 1529, these two divisions crossed the Ganges, and on Tuesday they marched on to the Gogra. Ustad Ali at the confluence was making excellent practice with his guns upon the Bengal vessels in the river. Meanwhile news came that Askari had got his divisions over the Gogra, and on the morning of Thursday, May 6, the battle began. The Bengal army, as was foreseen, moved up the river to meet Askari, and Babar at once ordered the fifth and sixth divisions to cross in any manner they could, swimming, in boats, or on bundles of reeds, and take the enemy in the rear. The movement was brilliantly carried out in the face of a determined resistance. Attacked in front and rear and flank, the enemy broke and fled. Good generalship had once more guided valour to victory. The result was the collapse of the Afghan rebellion and the conclusion of a treaty of peace with Bengal. In three battles Babar had reduced Northern India to submission.

It was his last exploit. The year and a half of life that remained to him he spent chiefly at Agra, endeavouring to set his new empire in order. For actual permanent organization, however, there was no time. A

large part of his dominions was under very loose control, and the polity of Hindustan under his rule was simply the strong hand of military power. In the more settled regions the lands and towns were parcelled out in fiefs among his officers, or jagirdars, who levied the land-tax from the cultivators, the duties from the merchants and shopkeepers, and the poll-tax from the Hindus, and paid fixed contributions in money and mili-



A SCENE AT AGRA.

tary service to the emperor. But the large zamindars, or landholders, were often so powerful that their dependence on the crown was little more than nominal, and India was still, as Erskine observes, "rather a congeries of little states under one prince than one regular and uniformly governed kingdom." The tribes of the frontier and hill districts can hardly be said to have submitted in more than form, and in Sind on the west and Bihar on the east the king's writ was lightly regarded. All the different provinces, however, according to a list in Babar's Memoirs, west to east from Bhira and Lahore

to Bahraich and Bihar, and north to south from Sialkot to Rantambhor, contributed to the revenue, which is stated at fifty-two crores of tankas or dams, which comes to £2,600,000 for the regular revenue from land-tax. Three-quarters of a century later his grandson Akbar drew a revenue of over £18,000,000 from the same source, though from a considerably larger area.

It was probably during the comparative leisure of his last year that Babar wrote that valuable description of Hindustan which displays his undiminished interest in natural history, and his singular quickness of observation. Though he had conquered his new empire, he did not love it. "The country and towns of Hindustan," he writes, "are extremely ugly. All its towns and lands have a uniform look; its gardens have no walls; the greater part of it is a level plain." He found the plains monotonous after the mountain scenery of Kabul and the well-watered orchards of Farghana. "Hindustan," he adds, "is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society. They have no genius, no intellectual comprehension, no politeness, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicrafts, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture. They have no good horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food or bread in their bazars, no baths, or colleges, or candles, or torches — never a candlestick!"

He would not have written this sweeping and wholly unjust condemnation had he lived longer in India and seen more of its people; and he does indeed admit that there are advantages, such as the abundance of workmen, and the "pleasant climate during the rains"; but, on the whole, to him "the chief excellency of Hindustan is that it is a big country with plenty of gold and silver." One can see that even from his throne at Agra he looked back with regret to his own land, the land of melons and cool waters, and remembered with the pang of the exile the joyous days he spent beside the Kabul river.

He was not the man he had been. Fever and a wandering restless life, joined to frequent bouts of drinking and constant use of opium, had undermined a wonderful constitution. Yet between his fits of fever his vigour remained extraordinary. He could take up a man under each arm, and run with them round the battlements of a fortress, leaping the embrasures, and even in March, 1529, he notes: "I swam across the river Ganges for amusement. I counted my strokes, and found that I swam over in thirty-three strokes. I then took breath, and swam back to the other side. I had crossed by swimming every river I had met, except only the Ganges." He was also constantly in the saddle, and often he did his eighty miles a day. All this did not make for long life, and Babar's snapped with the suddenness of an overstrained spring. He passed away in his beautiful garden palace at Agra on the 26th of December, 1530—a man of only forty-eight, a king of

Humayun
Jahangir

Babar
Akbar

Four Emperors: Babar, Humayun, Akbar, and Jahangir.
After a manuscript in the British Museum (Add. 20734).

thirty-six years crowded with hardship, tumult, and strenuous energy—but he lies at peace in his grave in the garden on the hill at Kabul, "the sweetest spot," which he had chosen himself, surrounded by those he loved, by the sweet-smelling flowers of his choice, and the cool running stream; and the people still flock to the tomb and offer prayers at the simple mosque which an august descendant built in memory of the founder of the Indian Empire.

CHAPTER IX

THE EBB OF THE TIDE

HUMAYUN

1530-1556 A.D.

IT was no easy throne that Babar left to his eldest son in December, 1530, nor was Humayun man enough to fill it. Though only twenty-three years of age, he was not without experience; he had commanded under his father in the Indian war, and had governed the outlying province of Badakhshan beyond the Hindu Kush. Babar had lavished good advice upon the son whom he loved above all things. "His presence," he once wrote, "opened our hearts like rosebuds and made our eyes shine like torches. His conversation had an ineffable charm, and he realized absolutely the ideal of perfect manhood." The young prince was indeed a gallant and lovable fellow, courteous, witty, and accomplished as his father, warm-hearted and emotional, almost quixotic in his notions of honour and magnanimity, personally brave—as indeed were all the princes of his house—and capable of great energy on occasions. But he lacked character and resolution. He was incapable of sustained effort, and after a moment of triumph

would bury himself in his harem and dream away the precious hours in the opium-eater's paradise while his enemies were thundering at the gate. Naturally kind, he forgave when he should have punished; light-hearted and sociable, he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the saddle. His character attracts but never dominates. In private life he might have been a delightful companion and a staunch friend; his virtues were Christian, and his whole life was that of a gentleman. But as a king he was a failure. His name means "fortunate," and never was an unlucky sovereign more miscalled.

The qualities most essential at the time of his accession were a firm grasp of the military situation and resolution to meet it. It was a position that called for boundless energy and soldierly genius. Babar, as we have seen, had not conquered Hindustan; he had only reduced to partial submission a territory comprising little more than what we should now call the Panjab and Northwest Provinces. He had not annexed Bengal to the east, nor the great provinces of Malwa and Gujarat, now united under one king, to the south. The many chiefs of Rajputana were only cowed, not subdued, and in most of the outlying parts of the kingdom the Moghul power was but slightly recognized. Numerous Afghan officers still held powerful fiefs, and these men had not forgotten that the kings of Delhi had been Afghans but a few years before. When a member of the deposed dynasty appeared among them in Bihar, there were all the materials for a formidable

insurrection. Thus even in his inherited dominions—about an eighth of all India—Humayun was not secure from rivals and revolts.

Nor was he safe from the hostility of his own family. Babar had particularly commended his other sons to Humayun's kindness, and never was forbearance more cruelly tried. There was not one of his three brothers who did not intrigue against him. Kamran, the next in age, had already been ruler of Kabul under his father, and had not only retained his western province but had annexed the Panjab, always professing his allegiance to Humayun, whose preoccupations, no less than his brotherly kindness, induced him to tolerate the usurpation. It was short-sighted policy, however, for with Kamran practically independent on the northwest frontier, the main recruiting-ground of the Moghul army was cut off. Hitherto the fighting strength of the Moslems in India had been nourished and restored by the hill tribes of Afghanistan and the men of the Oxus. Now that source was closed, and Humayun was forced to depend upon the army already in India, which was constantly depleted by loss in battle or by natural causes, without any means of reinforcement, and was suffering the inevitable degeneration that overtakes a hardy race when exposed to the luxuries of wealth and the influence of an enervating climate.

Kamran, a surly, ill-conditioned traitor, unworthy to be the son of Babar, was the most formidable of the brothers. Askari and Hindal, ever weak and shifty, were dangerous only as tools for ambitious men. Their

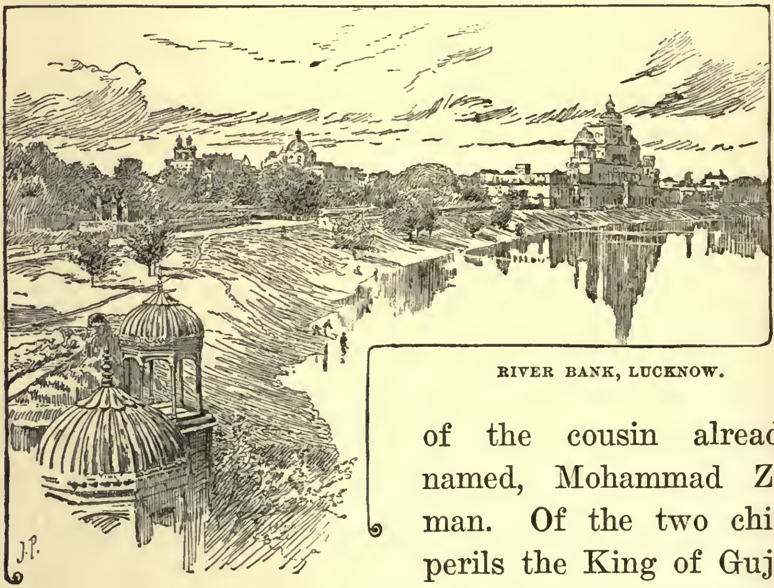
Hindu and Mohammedan Buildings

The luxury and magnificence of the Hindu courts and of their Mohammedan rulers is amply attested by their sumptuous edifices, many of which are of unsurpassed grandeur even when in ruins.

repeated treachery toward their too magnanimous brother was of a piece with their general worthlessness. Two cousins, Mohammad Zaman and Mohammad Sultan, also made their futile bids for a throne which not one of the family was then great enough to hold. Humayun was too gentle to do the only prudent thing, to make an end of them, and to this beautiful but unwise clemency he owed part of his misfortunes. But his worst enemy was himself. Instead of taking a statesmanlike view of the situation, meeting the most pressing danger first, and crushing one antagonist before he engaged another, he frittered away his army in divided commands and deprived it of its full strength; he left one enemy unsubdued behind him while he turned to meet another; and when victory chanced to reward his courage, rather than his tactics, he rested upon his laurels and made merry with his friends, whilst his foes used the precious time in gathering their forces for a fresh effort. Had he brought the whole of his strength to bear upon each enemy in turn, he must have been successful; for Babar's troops were still the men who had won Delhi and defeated Sanga, and Babar's generals were still in command of their divisions. But Humayun weakened their valour and destroyed their confidence by division and vacillation, neglected the counsels of the commanders, and displayed such indecision that it is a marvel that any army still adhered to his falling fortunes.

There were three ominous clouds on his horizon when he came to the throne. On the northwest was his brother Kamran; but as he professed loyalty, however

insincerely, Humayun was fain to let him alone. On the east were the Afghans in Bihar, with a brother of the late Lodi, Sultan of Delhi, at their head. On the south was Bahadur Shah, the King of Gujarat and Malwa, actively pressing his triumphs over the Rajputs and rapidly approaching within striking distance of Agra. He too had a pretender to put forward in the person



RIVER BANK, LUCKNOW.

of the cousin already named, Mohammad Zaman. Of the two chief perils the King of Gujarat was the more imposing, but the Afghan confederacy the more dangerous adversary. Humayun was perpetually hesitating between the two. First he marched to Bihar and easily disposed of Mahmud the Lodi in a decisive victory near Lucknow in 1531. Instead of following up his success by crushing the routed Afghans with his utmost strength, he abandoned the siege of Chunar, Sher Khan's

stronghold in Bihar, accepted a purely perfunctory submission, and thus left the most capable, unscrupulous, and ambitious man in the whole Afghan party free to mature his plans and strengthen his power while the emperor was away at the other end of Hindustan.

It was the fear of the King of Gujarat that induced this fatal retreat. Bahadur Shah undoubtedly was aiming at the conquest of Delhi, but he was not ready for it yet; and such raids or expeditions as he had encouraged the pretenders to the throne to lead against Agra and Kalinjar had been easily repulsed by the imperial troops. When Humayun, abandoning the fruits of his victory at Lucknow, arrived in Malwa at the close of 1534, he found Bahadur busily engaged in the siege of the great Rajput fortress of Chitor. Instead of attacking at once, and by his timely interference probably winning to his side the inestimable friendship of the Rajput chiefs, he must needs stand by till the quarrel was fought out. It was admirable chivalry to call a truce while his Moslem enemy was waging what might be termed a Holy War against Hindu "infidels," and one cannot help respecting Humayun's quixotic observance of a Mohammedan scruple of honour; *mais ce n'était pas la guerre.* Profiting by the emperor's fine feelings, Bahadur stormed Chitor; the Rajput women eagerly rushed upon the swords of their husbands and fathers to escape the shame of Moslem harems; the men sallied forth to be slaughtered; and the conqueror turned to meet his complaisant foe, who amiably awaited the issue.

Flushed with recent victory, the Gujaratis might

probably have overwhelmed Humayun's army, on which the irritation as well as the revels of the delay had exerted their usual influences; but the triumph of the heavy artillery in the siege of Chitor had given undue weight to the advice of the Ottoman engineer, the "Rumi Khan," who had worked the guns with the help of Portuguese and other European gunners; and, as with Sir John Burgoyne before Sevastopol, the voice of the engineer prevailed over the bolder counsels of the cavalry leaders. At the Rumi Khan's motion, instead of falling instantly upon the imperial troops, the army of Gujarat penned itself up in a fortified camp. The enemy, as the engineer foretold, confronted by the big guns, could not get in; but on the other hand the defenders could not get out. The open country around was in the hands of the Moghul archers, whose arrows gave short shrift to any men of Gujarat who ventured outside the ditch. Famine rendered the camp untenable, and at last in the dead of night Bahadur slunk away with only five followers. His army, discovering the desertion, immediately dispersed, and Humayun, on seeking the cause of the unusual hubbub, found himself in undisputed possession of the vast camp and all the spoils of the enemy. On this occasion he showed unwonted energy; pursued the King of Gujarat to Mandu, and on to Champanir, and Ahmadabad, and thence to Cambay, one fleeing as the other entered, till Bahadur at last found refuge in the island of Diu. The entire region of Malwa and Gujarat—two provinces which were equal in area to all the rest of Humayun's kingdom—had

fallen like ripe fruit into his hands. Never was conquest more easy.

Nor was ever conquest more recklessly squandered. The vast spoils of the Gujarat camp, of Champanir, and of Cambay, utterly demoralized the Moghuls. The emperor had shown energy and decision in the pursuit and he had proved his mettle when he himself took part in scaling the fort of Champanir by means of iron spikes, the forty-first man to reach the battlements. Then came the reaction. Instead of insuring the efficient control and administration of his new acquisitions, Humayun devoted himself to festivities in Malwa, while his brother Askari, as viceroy of Gujarat, revelled at Ahmadabad, and even boasted in his cups that he was king, and prepared to oust his brother, just as if there were no enemies in the land. The result of this foolish confidence was soon seen. The local governors and chiefs were still loyal to Bahadur, who had, moreover, purchased the support of the Portuguese by allowing them to build a fort at Diu. Finding his invaders entirely off their guard, the king advanced, and was everywhere welcomed with enthusiasm. Askari retired, and Gujarat reverted to its old ruler. Nor was this all. Humayun's fatal weakness in Bihar was working its inevitable punishment. Sher Khan had become supreme on the borders of Bengal, and Mohammad Sultan was already proclaimed king at Kanauj. What ought to have been done before had to be done now, and Humayun marched north to recover what his own folly had lost. No sooner was he gone than Malwa threw off the

Moghul authority and was joined again to Gujarat. One year had seen the rapid conquest of the two great provinces; the next saw them as quickly lost.

The only justification for the abandonment of so rich a prize would be the paramount necessity of suppressing the growing revolt in the eastern provinces. Yet the pleasure-loving emperor wasted a whole year at Agra in merrymaking and opiated idleness before he moved to the scene of rebellion. He even thought of first returning to recover Malwa and Gujarat before grappling with the very danger that had caused their abandonment. Nothing could more clearly show Humayun's incurable vacillation and military incompetence. When at last he set out in July, 1537, with every man he could muster, he carried all before him. The Rumi Khan, who, being an adventurer, had deserted to the winning side on the flight of the King of Gujarat, now plied his guns for Humayun, and his science compelled the surrender of Sher Khan's fortress of Chunar in the absence of its lord, who was then busily engaged in reducing the whole of Bengal to his sway.

This indomitable Afghan, whose bold career deserves a volume to itself, had long fixed his eyes on the decaying power of the Bengal kings and dreamed of a restoration of the Afghan ascendency. Descended from the royal house of Sur, kings of Ghor, he had risen from the rank of a mere administrator of a small district near Rohtas to be prime minister of one of the Lohani Afghans who had styled themselves kings of Bihar in the time of Babar. On that emperor's advance, Sher

Tomb of Humayun near Delhi.
From a Photograph.

Khan, or "Tiger-lord," so called because he killed a tiger that leaped suddenly upon the King of Bihar, at first nominally sided with the conqueror, although this did not prevent him from joining in Mahmud Lodi's attempt to recover the throne, nor from treacherously deserting the pretender at the battle with Humayun near Lucknow which dispelled the Lodi's hopes. Despite the fact that he was then again nominally reconciled with the Moghuls, and made his submission to Humayun when Chunar was besieged in 1532, the Afghan chief never abandoned his dream of sovereignty. During Humayun's long absence in the west, he skilfully enlarged his territories and strengthened his army, and while the emperor was busy for six months in a second siege of Chunar, its master was conquering Gaur, the capital of Bengal.

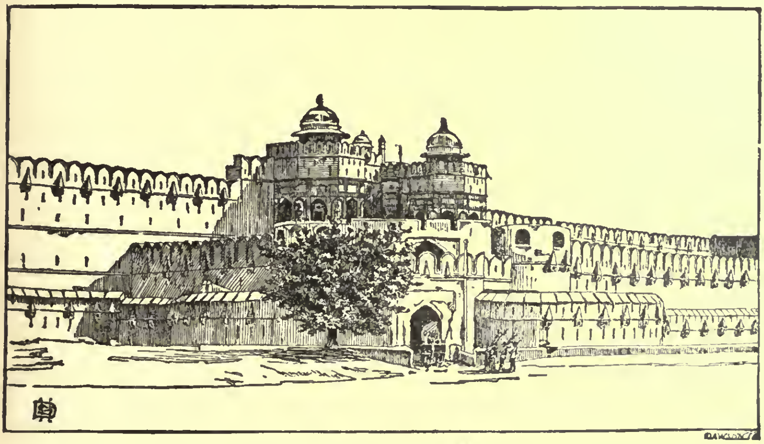
With unusual energy Humayun immediately pressed on to eject him before conquest had been consolidated into permanent rule in the wealthiest agricultural province of Hindustan. Sher Khan would listen to no overtures, though the emperor offered him pardon and the government of Jaunpur if he would submit. Leaving his son Jalal Khan to hold the pass which leads from Bihar into Bengal at the foot of the Rajmahal hills, the Afghan hurriedly conveyed his booty, treasure, artillery, and family into the impregnable fort of Rohtas, which he captured from its Hindu chief by the familiar stratagem of introducing armed men in women's litters. As soon as this manœuvre was accomplished and all was safe in Rohtas, Jalal, who had held the pass as long as

was needed and had inflicted considerable loss on the imperial advance-guard, joined his father, and Humayun was allowed to march into Bengal in 1538. He entered a devastated and ruined country, and found a capital strewn with corpses. Nevertheless here he enjoyed himself and feasted six precious months away, admiring the sights of the fertile province, and indulging with all his court and all his army in jollity and sensual pursuits.

During this interval of periodical eclipse the emperor seems never to have realized that he was cut off. Sher Khan, a master of strategy, had let Humayun into Bengal only to seize the approaches and sever his communications. He had the less difficulty inasmuch as the emperor, with his usual improvidence, had taken no steps to keep them open; while in the west his brothers were quite ready to leave him to his fate. Hindal, who had taken part in the Bengal campaign, and had been allowed to go to Tirhut to bring up stores, seized the opportunity to return to Agra, where he was soon persuaded by interested counsellors to proclaim himself emperor; and the pious sheikh, whom Humayun sent to bring him gently to reason, was murdered by the inflated usurper. Loyal officers, anxious to preserve Delhi for their lawful sovereign, called in the help of Kamran, who quickly reduced the pretensions of his younger brother. But Kamran was as unwilling as Hindal to go to the rescue of the emperor, whose critical position was perfectly known to all. They went a few marches together, and then turned back. Their plan was to let Humayun be worsted by Sher Khan and then to engage

the Afghan in their own behoof. They did not know the man they had to deal with. Sher Khan had seized every road leading from Bengal, he was laying siege to Chunar and Jaunpur, held all the country as far west as Kanauj, and had proclaimed himself king at Rohtas with the title of Sultan Sher Shah.

These disastrous tidings, filtering through the bazar gossip, gradually roused Humayun from his torpor.



DELHI GATE, AGRA FORT.

With mutiny open or concealed at Agra, with a rival king cutting off his communications and besieging his cities, with no hope of succour from any side, it was certainly time to act. Six months he had trifled in Bengal, and now the question was how to get out. His troops were demoralized by dissipation, disheartened by inaction, and reduced by sickness. They had to be bribed to advance. When at last they did march, they met with no opposition. Sher Shah was known to be on the watch, but he did not attempt to stop them. His

design was apparently to avoid a pitched battle, and rather to harass and, if possible, surprise the imperial army than to attempt its destruction in the field. Humayun accordingly was suffered to march along the left bank of the Ganges as far as Monghyr, where he deliberately crossed over to the right or south bank—the side on which Sher Shah lay—in order apparently to show that he was not afraid of him.

Thus he proceeded past Patna till he reached a spot close to where the battle of Baxar two hundred and thirty years later once more decided the fate of the same Moghul empire. Here, at Chaunsa, the army was suddenly checked by Sher Shah, who, tempted by the dispirited state of the imperialists, abandoned his watching attitude and rode in hot haste to stop their advance. The two forces camped opposite one another, and as neither seemed strong enough to warrant an attack, they remained facing each other for two months. The imperial troops were suffering grievously. The cattle and many of the horses were dead, troopers were dismounted, the country in front was in the enemy's hands, supplies were scarce, and there was no hope of help from Agra. The situation was desperate and Humayun opened negotiations. A treaty was arranged by which Sher Shah was to retain Bengal and part of Bihar, on condition of due and public recognition of the emperor as his suzerain. Everything seemed settled, or on the point of settlement, and the two armies began to fraternize while preparing to break up their camp. Suddenly, in the midst of the confusion of the removal, at

break of dawn, the Afghans fell upon the unsuspecting Moghuls from all sides. The surprise was complete. Many were slain asleep. Few had time to mount. Humayun himself was only saved by a water-carrier who supported him on his water-skin across the Ganges, into which he had recklessly plunged. Most of his army was drowned or captured, and the unlucky emperor arrived at Agra almost alone in May, 1539.

For nearly a year both sides gathered their forces for the final struggle, Sher Shah consolidating his power in Bengal, Humayun vacillating and wasting time, yet striving to unite his brothers in the common cause. On May 17, 1540, the armies met again opposite Kanauj, and the battle of the Ganges for a time put an end to the Moghul empire. Humayun's army, though at first one hundred thousand strong, was half-hearted, badly officered, weakened by constant desertions, and hampered with crowds of panic-stricken camp-followers; and the fight was over almost as soon as begun. "Before the enemy had discharged an arrow," says the historian Mirza Haidar, who was present, "the whole army was scattered and defeated" by mere panic and crowding; "not a gun was fired." All fled in utter confusion to the Ganges, where the bridge broke down and many were drowned in their heavy armour. Hu-

SILVER COIN OF SHER SHAH STRUCK AT DELHI, A. H. 947 (A.D. 1540-1).

mayun again escaped by the skin of his teeth. India had cast him off.

From that day for fifteen years he led a life of wandering. He was in the deserts of Rajputana and Sind for three years, in great straits and hardships, trying to beat up recruits; there he fell in love with the daughter of his brother Hindal's sheikh, a sayyid of the Prophet's race; and there at Amarkot his son Akbar was born, October 15, 1542. Then he fled to Persia, where he became the not very welcome guest of Shah Tahmasp. Aided by the shah, he conquered Kandahar from his own brother Askari in 1545, and took Kabul from Kamran in 1547. He was now in much the same position that Babar had occupied before his invasion of India twenty-five years earlier.

The next nine years were spent in varying fortunes, sometimes in conquest, sometimes in loss, and it was not until his brothers were dead or exiled that Humayun had peace in his little Afghan realm. Hindal fell in battle; Askari died on a pilgrimage to Mekka; and the irreconcilable Kamran, after repeated forgiveness, had to be blinded and sent to Mekka, where he too died. Humayun owed much of his misfortunes to this unnatural brother, and cannot be charged with anything but long-suffering patience of his misdeeds.

Meanwhile Sher Shah had reduced the greater part of Hindustan to submission, and among the Moslems at least there was every disposition to hail the accession of an Afghan king, born in India, and gifted with unusual administrative as well as military talents. His

ability and wisdom are unquestioned, and in his fiscal and other reforms we see the true origin of many of Akbar's most famous measures. "The whole of his brief administration," in the words of Keene, "was based on the principle of union. A devout Moslem, he never oppressed his Hindu subjects. The disputes of his own people he suppressed with all the energy of his nature. He laboured day and night, for he said 'It behooves the great to be always active.' He divided his territory into hundreds, in each of which were local officers whose place it was to mediate between the people and the officers of the crown. Not content with the administrative side of social reform, he went beyond most Moslem rulers and attempted a certain crude legislation. The nature of the attempts attributed to him shows that a critical moment was passing in mediæval India. His ordinances touched on almost all the primary parts of administration, and evinced real care for the people's welfare. All this has an importance beyond the immediate time. After the Moghul restoration Sher Shah's officials passed into Akbar's service; the faults imputed by the shah to what he called Moghul administration—but which are common to all Turks—were prevented; and this far-sighted man even after his death and the subversion of his dynasty, remained the originator of all that was done by mediæval Indian rulers for the good of the people."

It must not be imagined that all this was accomplished by mildness. "Sher Shah's authority," says his historian, Abbas Khan, "whether he was absent or

present, was completely established over the race of Afghans. From fear either of personal punishment or of deprivation of office there was not a creature who dared to act in opposition to his regulations; and if a son of his own, or a brother, or any of his relations and kin, or any chief or minister, did a thing displeasing to Sher Shah, and it got to his knowledge, he would order the culprit to be bound and put to death. All, laying aside every bond of friendship or regard, for the sake of the honour of the Afghan name, obeyed unhesitatingly his irresistible decrees. From the day that Sher Shah was established on the throne no man dared to breathe in opposition to him; nor did any one raise the standard of contumacy or rebellion against him; nor was any heart-tormenting thorn grown in the garden of his kingdom; nor was there any of his nobles or soldiery, or a thief or a robber, who dared to turn the eye of dishonesty upon another's goods, nor did any robbery or stealing ever occur in his dominions. Travellers and wayfarers in Sher Shah's reign had no need to keep watch, nor feared to halt in the midst of a desert. They camped at night at every place, desert or inhabited, without fear; they set their goods and provisions upon the plain and turned out their mules to graze, and themselves slept with easy mind and free from care as if at home, and the *mansabdars*, or commanders of companies of horse, kept watch over them lest any mischief might befall the travellers and they themselves be held responsible. Such a protection overshadowed the world that a cripple was not afraid of

a Rustam." This quotation is sufficient to indicate the influence which Sher Shah exerted during his short sway.

His brief but beneficent rule came to an end in 1545, when he was killed at the siege of Kalinjar during a vigorous attempt to subdue the indomitable Rajputs. He left no fit successor to carry on his wise schemes, on which he was still meditating as he lay wounded in his tent. Under his son, Islam Shah, the ancient rivalries of the Afghans revived, and when Islam Shah died nine years later, everything was in confusion. His son, a boy of twelve, was murdered by his uncle Adil Shah (or Adali), a debauched brute, who left all real power in the hands of his Hindu vizir Himu. Rebellions naturally arose. Ibrahim Sur seized Delhi and Agra, and Sikandar Sur, another nephew of Sher Shah, took possession of the Panjab, and then drove Ibrahim from his new sovereignty.

In the midst of this turmoil Humayun, for once, grasped his opportunity. Descending from Kabul with only fifteen thousand horse in 1555, and seizing the Panjab, he routed Sikandar at Sirhind, drove him to the Himalayas, and took possession of Delhi and Agra. Prince Akbar was sent in pursuit of the fugitive Afghans, while Humayun set about organizing his recovered kingdom. It seemed as if his luck had turned at last. But nothing ever went well for long with this unfortunate monarch. Scarcely had he enjoyed his throne at Delhi for six months when he slipped down the polished steps of his palace, and died in his forty-

ninth year (Jan. 24, 1556). His end was of a piece with his character. If there was a possibility of falling, Humayun was not the man to miss it. He tumbled through life, and he tumbled out of it. At his tomb, three centuries later, the last of the Moghul emperors, the feeble and aged Shah Alam, surrendered to Hodson of Hodson's Horse, and the old man's savage and worthless sons paid the penalty of their treachery. It was perhaps fitting that the grave of the humane and chivalrous son of Babar should be the silent witness of a righteous vengeance.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I

FIRDAUSI'S PANEGYRIC OF MAHMUD OF GHAZNI AND HIS SATIRE ON THE SAME RULER

Among the men of genius whom Mahmud of Ghazni attracted to his court was the great Persian poet Firdausi of Tus in Khorasan (see page 32 above). Firdausi sang in epic strains of the ancient glory of Iran, and Mahmud promised him a thousand gold pieces for every thousand couplets he should compose of the *Shah Namah*, or "Book of Kings." This princely assurance called forth from the grateful poet a splendid panegyric which forms part of the invocation that introduces the famous epic. These eulogistic phrases have been rendered into English by Atkinson as follows:

THE PANEGYRIC

Praise, praise to Mahmud, who of like renown,
In battle or the banquet, fills the throne;
Lord of the realms of Chin and Hindustan,
Sovereign and Lord of Persia and Turan,
With his loud voice he rends the flintiest ear;
On land a tiger fierce, untouched by fear,
And on the wave, he seems the crocodile
That prowls amidst the waters of the Nile.
Generous and brave, his equal is unknown;
In deeds of princely worth he stands alone.
The infant in the cradle lisps his name;
The world exults in Mahmud's spotless fame.

In festive hours Heaven smiles upon his truth;
In combat deadly as the dragon's tooth;
Bounteous in all things, his exhaustless hand
Diffuses blessings through the grateful land;
And, of the noblest thoughts and actions, lord;
The soul of Gabriel breathes in every word;
May Heaven with added glory crown his days;
Praise, praise to mighty Mahmud — everlasting praise!

The eulogy unfortunately proved premature. When the great poem of sixty thousand verses was completed, it was presented to Mahmud; but the royal patron, influenced apparently by court intrigue against Firdausi, substituted silver for gold in payment, sending to the poet sixty thousand pieces of the white metal in place of the yellow. Firdausi, disappointed and enraged, rejected the reward with scorn, distributed the money-bags among three servants of the bath where he happened to be when the gift was sent, and gave vent to the venom of his spleen in verses of tremendous invective, stigmatizing Mahmud as base-born and of a spirit ignoble as his birth. The sequel has already been told (page 32), but the stain on the renown of Mahmud of Ghazni will never be removed.

THE SATIRE

Know, tyrant as thou art, this earthly state
Is not eternal, but of transient date;
Fear God, then, and afflict not human-kind;
To merit Heaven, be thou to Heaven resigned.
Afflict not even the ant; though weak and small,
It breathes and lives, and life is sweet to all.
Knowing my temper, firm, and stern, and bold,
Did'st thou not, tyrant, tremble to behold

My sword blood-dropping? Had'st thou not the sense
To shrink from giving man like me offence?
What could impel thee to an act so base?
What, but to earn and prove thy own disgrace?
Why was I sentenced to be trod upon
And crushed to death by elephants? By one
Whose power I scorn! Could'st thou presume that I
Would be appalled by thee, whom I defy?
I am the lion, I, inured to blood,
And make the impious and the base my food;
And I could grind thy limbs, and spread them far
As Nile's dark waters their rich treasures bear.
Fear thee? I fear not man, but God alone,
I only bow to His Almighty throne.
Inspired by Him my ready numbers flow;
Guarded by Him I dread no earthly foe.
Thus in the pride of song I pass my days,
Offering to Heaven my gratitude and praise.

From every trace of sense and feeling free,
When thou art dead, what will become of thee?
If thou shouldst tear me limb from limb, and cast
My dust and ashes to the angry blast,
Firdausi still would live, since on thy name,
Mahmud, I did not rest my hopes of fame
In the bright page of my heroic song,
But on the God of Heaven, to whom belong
Boundless thanksgivings, and on Him whose love
Supports the Faithful in the realms above,
The mighty Prophet! none who e'er reposed
On Him existence without hope has closed.

And thou would'st hurl me underneath the tread
Of the wild elephant, till I were dead!
Dead! by that insult roused, I should become
An elephant in power, and seal thy doom —
Mahmud! if fear of man hath never awed
Thy heart, at least fear thy Creator, God.
Full many a warrior of illustrious worth,
Full many of humble, of imperial birth,

Tur, Salim, Jamshid, Minuchihr the brave,
Have died; for nothing had the power to save
These mighty monarchs from the common doom;
They died, but blest in memory still they bloom.
Thus kings too perish — none on earth remain,
Since all things human seek the dust again.

O, had thy father graced a kingly throne,
Thy mother been for royal virtues known,
A different fate the poet then had shared,
Honours and wealth had been his just reward
But how remote from thee a glorious line!
No high, ennobling ancestry is thine;
From a vile stock thy bold career began,
A Blacksmith was thy sire of Isfahan.
Alas! from vice can goodness ever spring?
Is mercy hoped for in a tyrant king?
Can water wash the Ethiopian white?
Can we remove the darkness from the night?
The tree to which a bitter fruit is given,
Would still be bitter in the bowers of Heaven;
And a bad heart keeps on its vicious course;
Or if it changes, changes for the worse;
Whilst streams of milk, where Eden's flowrets blow,
Acquire more honeyed sweetness as they flow.
The reckless king who grinds the poor like thee,
Must ever be consigned to infamy!

APPENDIX II

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

A. D.	
712	The Arabs conquer Sind.
1000–26	Mahmud of Ghazni's campaigns in India.
1030	The Panjab remains the sole Moslem province in India.
1034	Mas'ud storms Hansi.
1155	Destruction of Ghazni by Jahansoz.
1186	Mohammad Ghori conquers the Panjab.
1192	He defeats Rajputs at Narain.
1194	Conquest of Benares.
1196	Aybek annexes Gujarat.
1201	Bakhtiyar conquers Bengal.
1221	Invasion of Chingiz Khan.
1234	All Hindustan submits to Altamish.
1241	The Mongols again invade the Panjab.
1282	Balban recovers Bengal from rebels.
1294	Ala-ad-din invades the Deccan.
1297	Battle of Kili: retreat of Mongols.
1303	Conquest of Chitor.
1308–10	Deccan conquests (Telingana, Dvara-samudra).
1336	Mohammad Taghlak transfers his capital to the Deccan.
1347	Deccan independent under Hasan Gangu Bahmani.
1352	Bengal united and independent under Ilyas.
1355 ff.	Public works, canals, etc., of Firoz Shah.
1370	Conquest of Thatta by Firoz Shah.

A. D.	
1370	Foundation of kingdom of Khandesh.
1394	Sharki kingdom of Jaunpur founded.
1396	Kingdom of Gujarat founded.
1398	Invasion of Timur Lang.
1401	Kingdom of Malwa founded.
1435 ff.	King of Malwa takes Kalpi and besieges Delhi.
1440	Malwa defeated by Kumbha, raja of Chitor.
1452	King of Jaunpur lays siege to Delhi.
1477	Bahlol of Delhi conquers Jaunpur.
1477–81	Bahmani conquests in Deccan.
1484–92	Foundation of Deccan kingdoms of Berar, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, and Bidar.
1498	Vasco da Gama lands at Calicut.
1508	Egyptian naval victory over the Portuguese at Chaul.
1509	Almeida defeats Egyptian fleet off Diu.
1512	Kingdom of Golkonda founded.
1513	Portuguese factory established at Diu.
1524	Babar overruns the Panjab.
1526	Battle of Panipat: Babar annexes Delhi.
1527	Battle of Kanwaha: Babar defeats the Rajputs.
1528	Battle of the Ganges: Babar defeats the Afghans.
1529	Battle of the Gogra: Babar defeats the Bengalis.
1531	Humayun defeats the Afghans near Lucknow.
1535–6	Humayun conquers and loses Malwa and Gujarat.
1538	Humayun in Bengal.
1539	Sher Shah defeats Humayun at Chaunsa.
1540	Battle of Kanauj: flight of Humayun.
1555	Battle of Sirhind: Humayun recovers Delhi.

APPENDIX III

MOHAMMEDAN DYNASTIES

GHAZNAVIDS

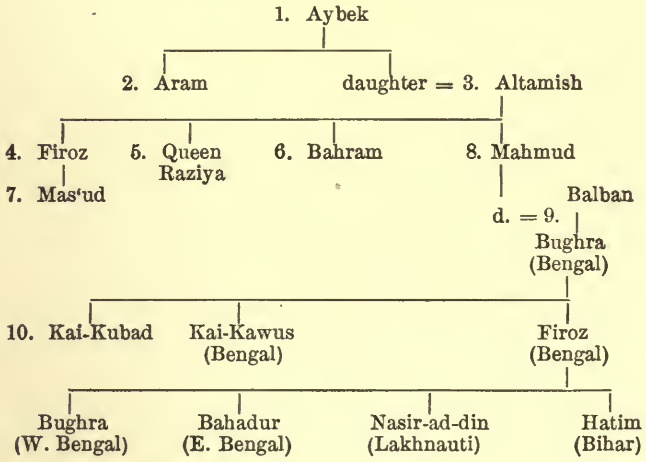
A. H.		A. D.
366	Sabuktagin	976
387	Isma'il	997
388	MAHMUD	998
421	Mohammad	1030
421	Mas'ud I	1030
432	Maudud	1040
440	Mas'ud II	1048
440	'Ali	1048
440	'Abd-ar-Rashid	1049
444	*Tughril* (usurper)	1052
444	Farrukhzad	1052
451	Ibrahim	1059
492	Mas'ud III	1099
508	Sherzad	1114
509	Arslan Shah	1115
512	Bahram Shah	1118
547	Khusru Shah	1152
555–582	Khusru Malik	1160–1186

HOUSE OF GHOR

——	Kutb-ad-din	——
543	Saif-ad-din Suri	1148
544	'Ala-ad-din Husain Jahan-soz	1149

A. H.		A. D.
556	Saif-ad-din Mohammad	1161
558	Ghiyas-ad-din ibn Sam	1163
569	Mu'izz-ad-din MOHAMMAD GHORI at Ghazni	1174ff
570 ff.	Conquers Hindustan	1175ff
599–602	Succeeds Ghiyas-ad-din at Ghor	1201–1206

TREE OF THE SLAVE KINGS OF DELHI



KINGS OF DELHI

I—Slave Kings

602	AYBEK, Kutb-ad-din	1206
607	Aram	1210
607	ALTAMISH, Shams-ad-din	1210
633	Firoz I, Rukn-ad-din	1236
634	Raziyat-ad-din	1236
637	Bahram, Mu'izz-ad-din	1240
639	Mas'ud, 'Ala-ad-din	1242
644	Mahmud, Nasir-ad-din	1246

A. H.		A. D.
664	BALBAN, Ghiyas-ad-din	1266
686	Kai-Kubad, Mu'izz-ad-din	1287
	II — Khaljis	
689	Firoz II, Jalal-ad-din	1290
695	Ibrahim, Rukn-ad-din	1296
695	MOHAMMAD, 'ALA-AD-DIN	1296
715	'Omar, Shihab-ad-din	1316
716	Mubarak, Kutb-ad-din	1316
720	Khusru, Nasir-ad-din	1321
	III — House of Taghlak	
720	Taghlak	1321
725	MOHAMMAD TAGHLAK	1325
752	FIROZ III	1351
790	Taghlak II	1388
791	Abu-Bakr	1388
792	Mohammad	1390
796	Sikandar	1394
796	{ Mahmud { Nasrat	1394
801–2	*Invasion of* TIMUR	1398–9
802	Mahmud restored	1399
815	[Daulat Khan Lodi]	1412
	IV — Sayyids	
817	Khizr	1414
824	Mubarak	1421
837	Mohammad	1433
847	'Alam	1443
	V — Lodis	
855	BUHLOL	1451
894	SIKANDAR	1488
923	Ibrahim	1518
932	*Invasion of Babar*	1526

VI—Afghans

A. H.		A. D.
946	SHER SHAH	1539
952	Islam Shah	1545
960	Mohammad ʻAdil	1552
961	Ibrahim Sur	1553
962	Sikandar	1554
962	*Moghul Conquest*	1555

VII—Moghul Emperors [1]

932	BABAR	1526
937	Humayun	1530
946	Deposed by Sher Shah	1539
962	Humayun restored	1555

GOVERNORS AND KINGS OF BENGAL

599	BAKHTIYAR Khalji	1202
602	ʻIzz-ad-din Mohammad Shiran	1205
605	ʻAla-ad-din Mardan	1208
608	Ghiyas-ad-din ʻIwaz	1211
624	Nasir-ad-din Mahmud	1226
627	ʻAla-ad-din Jani	1229
627	Saif-ad-din Aybek	1229
631	ʻIzz-ad-din Tughril Tughan	1233
642	Kamar-ad-din Tamar	1244
644	Ikhtiyar-ad-din Yuzbek	1246
656	Jalal-ad-din Masʻud	1258
657	ʻIzz-ad-din Balban	1258
659 ?	Mohammad Arslan Tatar Khan	1260 ?
——	Sher Khan	——
——	Amin Khan	——
677	Mughis-ad-din Tughril	1278
681	Nasir-ad-din Bughra, son of Balban of Delhi	1282

[1] For the continuation of the list of Moghul Emperors see the Chronological Appendix in the next volume.

A. H.		A. D.
691	Rukn-ad-din Kai-Kawus, son of Bughra	1291
702	Shams-ad-din Firoz, son of Bughra	1302
718	Shihab-ad-din Bughra, son of Bughra (W. Bengal)	1318
710	Ghiyas-ad-din Bahadur, son of Firoz (E. Bengal)	1310
719	Ghiyas-ad-din Bahadur, son of Firoz (all Bengal)	1319
723–6	Nasir-ad-din, son of Firoz (Lakhnauti)	1323–5
725–31	Bahadur restored, with Bahram (E. Bengal)	1324–30
731–9	Bahram	1330–8
726–40	Kadr Khan (Lakhnauti)	1325–39
724–40	‘Izz-ad-din (Satgaon)	1323–39
739–50	Fakhr-ad-din Mubarak (E. Bengal)	1338–49
750–3	Ikhtiyar-ad-din Ghazi (E. Bengal)	1349–52
740–6	‘Ala-ad-din ‘Ali (W. Bengal)	1339–45
746	Shams-ad-din Ilyas	1345
759	Sikandar I	1358
792	Ghiyas-ad-din A‘zam	1389
799	Saif-ad-din Hamza	1396
809	Shams-ad-din	1406
812	Shihab-ad-din Bayazid (with Raja Kans)	1409
817	Jalal-ad-din Mohammad	1414
835	Shams-ad-din Ahmad	1431
846	Nasir-ad-din Mahmud	1442
864	Rukn-ad-din Barbak	1459
879	Shams-ad-din Yusuf	1474
886	Sikandar II	1481
886	Jalal-ad-din Fath	1481
892	Shahzada Barbak Habshi	1486
892	Saif-ad-din Firoz	1486
895	Nasir-ad-din Mahmud	1489
896	Shams-ad-din Muzaffar	1490
899	‘Ala-ad-din Husain	1493
925	Nasir-ad-din Nasrat	1518
939	‘Ala-ad-din Firoz	1532

A. H.		A. D.
939	Ghiyas-ad-din Mahmud	1532
944	*Conquest by Humayun*	1537
946	Sher Shah (Sultan of Delhi)	1539
952	Islam Shah (Sultan of Delhi)	1545
960	Shams-ad-din Mohammad Sur	1552
962	Bahadur	1554
968	Ghiyas-ad-din Jalal	1560
971	Sulaiman Kararani	1563
980	Bayazid	1572
980	Dawud	1572
984	*Annexed by Akbar*	1576

KINGS OF THE EAST (JAUNPUR)

796	Khwaja-i-Jahan	1394
802	Mubarak	1399
803	Ibrahim	1401
844	Mahmud	1440
861	Mohammad	1457
863	Husain	1458
881	*Annexed by Delhi*	1477

KINGS OF MALWA

I—Ghoris

804	Dilawar Khan Ghori	1401
808	Hushang	1406
838	Mohammad	1434

II—Khaljis

839	Mahmud I Khalji	1435
880	Ghiyas	1475
906	Nasir	1500
916	Mahmud II	1510
937	*Annexed by Gujarat*	1531

KINGS OF GUJARAT

A. H.		A. D.
799	Zafar Khan, Muzaffar I	1397
814	Ahmad I	1411
816	Mohammad Karim	1443
855	Kutb-ad-din	1451
863	Dawud	1458
863	Mahmud I	1458
917	Muzaffar II	1511
932	Sikandar	1525
932	Mahmud II (Nasir)	1525
932	Bahadur	1526
943	Miran Mohammad (of Khandesh)	1537
944	Mahmud III	1537
961	Ahmad II	1553
969	Muzaffar III	1561
980	*Annexed by Akbar*	1572

BAHMANI KINGS OF THE DECCAN

748	Hasan Gangu Zafar Khan	1347
759	Mohammad I	1358
776	Mujahid	1375
780	Dawud	1378
780	Mahmud I	1378
799	Ghiyas-ad-din	1397
799	Shams-ad-din	1397
800	Firoz	1397
825	Ahmad I	1422
838	Ahmad II	1435
862	Humayun	1458
865	Nizam	1461
867	Mohammad II	1463
887	Mahmud II	1482

A. H.		A. D.
924	Ahmad III	1518
927	‘Ala-ad-din	1520
929	Wali-Allah	1522
932–3	Kalim-Allah	1525–6

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